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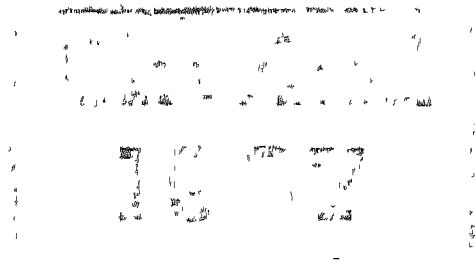
THE CROSS MOVES EAST

A STUDY IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF
GANDHI'S "SATYAGRAHA"

by

JOHN S. HOYLAND

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BEST OF MISSIONARY COLLEAGUES

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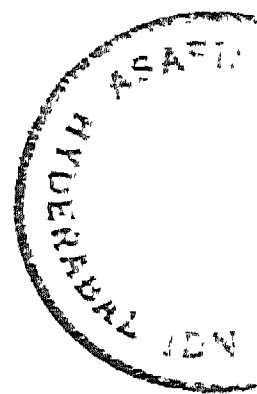
CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE CROSS	9
II. THE CROSS IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY	31
III. INDIAWARDS	55
IV. THE INDIAN SPIRIT OF DEVOTION	68
V. "SATYAGRAHA"	90
VI. THE GENESIS OF "SATYAGRAHA"	121
VII. THE CROSS AND "SATYAGRAHA"	147
APPENDIX	158

THE CROSS MOVES EAST

CHAPTER ONE

THE CROSS



St. Paul was conscious, as almost all the great liberators of humanity have been conscious, of an eternal and inevitable strife between two antagonistic world-orders.

On the one hand there were the forces of 'this world': and on the other there were the forces of 'the Spirit.' In Christ's own phrase, the Kingdom of Heaven was ranged against the kingdoms of this world. In St. Augustine the terminology is a little different, but the thought is the same—the Earthly City is arrayed against the City of God.

The same conception appears again and again through the centuries of Christian history, and has recently been given voice to, by a distinguished modern thinker, in his discussion of the antinomy between the 'civilisation of power' and the 'civilisation of culture.'

—But St. Paul's conceptions regarding this unrelenting antagonism between the two world-orders differ from those of later writers in one vital respect. He was convinced that in a deep and secret sense

the victory has already been won, and won by the forces of the Spirit.

He wrote to his friends at Colossae, "By the Cross Christ triumphed over the hostile princes and rulers, and boldly displayed them as His conquests" (Col. ii. 15).

In other words, the Cross of Christ meant to Paul that the world-order of force and greed, which was also inevitably a world-order of futility and ruin, had already been discredited, repulsed, and triumphed over by the forces of the Spirit. In the Cross God's incarnate love had come to grips with this ancient evil world-order, and had worsted it, by suffering the worst at its hands, in patient love.

Paul believed also that the Cross was an eternal principle, an immortal and inexhaustible source of power. There was, in the Cross, already present and available in the world a limitless store of spiritual power, of Divine good will, upon which any individual combatant in the warfare between the two world-orders could draw freely, and could gain therefrom, here and now, absolutely certain victory over wrong and evil. For Paul knew that God's love, bearing all agony and shame redemptively, as Christ had borne it, was in itself eternal victory over all wrong and evil; so that the Christ-trusting soul has only to tap those resources which are stored in the Cross and his triumph is already won.

THE CROSS

Paul drew upon this inexhaustible store of power, for his own individual need, when he went through the experience which he describes as 'nailing my old self to the Cross of Christ,' the result of which was that 'I no longer live, but Christ liveth in me.' He urged his converts to seek the same experience for themselves, not merely individually, but in the life of the newly-born Christian communities which were beginning to appear all over the Roman world. He thought of the Cross as an undying principle of power and life, through obedience to which wrong might be conquered anywhere and at any time, by following Christ's way of suffering love, and by remaining in trustful dependence upon Him. He knew that God cannot force spiritual beings—i.e. beings to whom He has given the splendid but terrible gift of will—to follow His purposes and accept His rule; for any such forcing implies an immediate revoking of God's own gift of the power to will. God can only achieve His purpose by 'persuasion,' by inducing these spiritual beings freely to follow His way, and joyfully to accept His control. So only can His subjects remain spiritual beings, i.e. retain any real existence.

But this 'persuasion' is in the long run only to be achieved by a process of suffering love, which leads the lover to bear in his own flesh the evils which ensue from not following God's purpose, and from not accepting His rule. This process

means the Cross, which changes the will of estrangement into the will of joyful sonship, by free self-sacrifice on behalf of the estranged and rebellious, transforming the evil will into the good.

The realisation of this truth of the Cross, as an eternal principle, had brought ineffable joy to Paul's heart, so that he could declare to the Galatians, "God forbid that I should glory in anything except the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, upon which the world is crucified to me, and I am crucified to the world" (Gal. vi. 14). Whenever Paul was tempted to gloom and despondency: whenever an impulse came over him to congratulate himself on the fine fellow he was and the fine work he was doing: whenever the subtle attractiveness of some second-best course of action made its appeal to him: whenever selfishness of motive or conduct, under any shape or form, threatened to invade his life, he ran to the Cross and looked upon the Figure hanging there. As he looked, the true standards were re-established in power within his spirit: his will became attuned once more to the will of the Crucified: mean motives and half-good lines of action sank into their due perspective: and the true Joy came flooding into his heart once more, as he realised that *the Cross was the principle by which he, Paul, was to live*.

Thus the Cross came to mean to Paul, not only the great assurance, both historic and indwelling,

of God's love and God's sacrifice for those whom He loves; but a whole system of ethics.

In that single Figure, dead in that way so many years ago for him, Paul, and for all humanity, yet still living mightily, was summed up eternal Right at strife with, and conquering through defeat, the Wrong which too often seems eternal also.

The Cross was a final and sovereign standard of truth and goodness, by which Paul's own life must be lived, if it was to be rescued from futility and brought into the sweep of that Divine and glorious purpose, to share which is in itself the deepest and loftiest Joy.

Thus Paul could utter this daring aspiration, which was at the same time a direct and definite command, to his converts at Philippi, "Let the same purpose be in you which was in Christ Jesus. . . . He stripped Himself of His glory and took on Him the nature of a slave, and even stooped to die, yes to die on the Cross" (Phil. ii. 5-8). Paul had seen the Cross as the sole, and final, solution to the problem of pain. His contemplation of the Cross of Christ had taught him that pain may be something sacramental, something redemptive, something to be embraced, if it comes, as the deepest sharing of the purpose and spirit of God. The disciple of Christ is to follow his Master even in this terrifyingly practical sense that he will be restless and conscience-stung, he will despise and

loath himself, so long as he has not with deliberate purpose taken upon him something of Christ's suffering, for the sake of those who are needy, oppressed and helpless. He must follow Christ even in this, the self-stripping, the enslavement, the lingering and abject death, all undergone for the sake of needy humanity.

Still to-day we look out upon a world tortured and agonising in every description of pain. It is the function of the Christ-lover in this world to have the Spirit of his Master so springing up in his heart that it shall shrivel within him any inclination which he may once have had to profit from the pain of others, to snatch acquisitively good things for himself from a system, or a world-order, where so many are in anguish.

More than this—the Spirit of Christ within the Christ-lover makes him, if he is worth calling a Christ-lover, strip himself of one special advantage after another, that he may be like his brethren, and genuinely share their lot.

Finally, that Spirit spurs him on till he sacrifices his painlessness and his freedom, taking suffering and bondage on himself redemptively, for the sake of others who are in pain and bondage. Not only so, but the redemptive bearing of these things becomes to him a sacrament, that he may share in the world's anguish perfectly *from within*, and follow Christ's way to the utmost.

Then indeed such a man is bearing the Cross; for he conquers evil in Christ's way, by patiently-suffering love, which endures the worst that evil can do, even to death, for the sake of his brethren.

Paul had practised his own principles thus enunciated. He knew pain, and knew pain well. It had entered his life overwhelmingly, no mere 'thorn in the flesh,' but excruciating agony. "There has been sent to me, like the agony of impalement, Satan's angel dealing blow after blow, lest I should be over-elated. As for this, three times have I besought the Lord to rid me of him; but His reply has been, "My grace suffices for you" (2 Cor. xii. 7-9).

It is clear that this experience of pain had threatened to cripple Paul's usefulness. It had made him in some fashion ridiculous and contemptible. It had tortured him, probably for years.

But pain had become for Paul, not merely a salutary discipline, but the raw material of joy, triumph, Christ-revealing grace, and blessing to other people. Through pain Paul had penetrated farther into the experience of Christ than he could ever had penetrated without that grim tutor; he had achieved incalculably more also in usefulness for Christ's world. Through pain he had been driven back, absolutely helpless, a hundred times to Christ Himself, to obtain what Christ alone can give, the

grace and strength to live bravely through the next agonising moment—for that is all he could ask, and that was enough. Thus there had been bred in Paul the character of a Cross-bearer; and his pain had become a redemptive sharing of Christ's sufferings. Pain had brought Paul into a relationship to his Master which would have been impossible otherwise; and it was not only a relationship from which Paul got help for his own need; it was a relationship which made Paul, in his pain and through his pain, an agent of redemption to other men. Pain had humbled him: had cast out of him all foolish 'elation,' all arrogant self-confidence. It had purified him, sweetened his sternness, mellowed his crudities, made him sympathetic, gracious, generously eager to help others that they might find his own enduring solace. Pain had bred in him more and more of Christlikeness; for it had kept him, inevitably, close to Christ—so close to Him and so entirely dependent upon Him for strength to live from minute to minute through his pain, that he could not fail to become more like his Friend in the most distinctive of all His qualities and activities, His Cross-bearing for the sake of needy humanity.

Paul had learnt another sovereign lesson about pain. That the weaker, more persecuted, more despised, more beset by dangers, sufferings, and

disabilities he might be, the more opportunity was there for Christ to show Himself through Paul. "Most gladly therefore will I boast of my infirmities rather than complain of them, in order that Christ's power may overshadow me. In fact I take delight in infirmities, in the bearing of insults, in distress, in persecutions, in grievous difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. xii. 6).

Out of the pain comes a Joy, which could never have been but for the pain: and the Joy is above all this—the knowledge (not a knowledge merely of the mind, nor of a victorious faith, but of actual concrete personal experience) that Christ is most fully able to work through us and to reveal Himself in us when we are weakest; for when we are at the end of our resources, our last defence gone, our powers utterly exhausted, then we are flung back in most complete dependence upon Christ, so that Christ can then work through us most effectively, show Himself through us most plainly, and hold us most closely in His own joyful friendship.

Paul had realised also that from the universal point of view—the point of view of ultimate standards and values, which some day we shall share in God, looking back upon our struggles and trials as things of the small incidental past—what we shall recognise as significant is not the fact that we have suffered, but the spirit in which we have borne

our suffering. If that spirit has been right, we shall regret that we did not suffer more, since in so doing we might have borne more of the weight of the Cross. We shall be like Simon of Cyrene, who in after life must often have longed that the cruel degradation, and mental pain, of his Cross-bearing might have been twice as long, if Jesus could have been relieved thereby.

If we have no pain, it is almost impossible that the spirit of Christlikeness—the spirit which joyfully bears pain for others, and for and with God—will be even dimly developed in us and through us. But from pain rightly borne comes the deepest joy of all, the sharing of the Cross of Christ.

This leads us on to consider an even deeper and more mysterious aspect of the Cross. Paul says to the Colossians, “I fill up in my own person whatever is lacking in Christ’s afflictions on behalf of His body, the Church” (Col. i. 24). He has come into a place where pain is not an enemy, nor even a schoolmaster, but a crown, and a crown to be accepted and worn as the highest and most glorious proof of fellowship with Christ.

At the back of all spiritual reality there lies this fact—we live in a universe where, as the Cross has shown to us, wrong can in the long run only be conquered by pain borne freely for the sake of winning release from wrong and pain for others.

Christ has given in the Cross the final and perfect demonstration of the fact that even to omnipotence and deity itself there is no way of conquering the evil will, but by bearing in patient love the pain and cruelty wrought by its malevolence. For so only can this evil will be changed into a good will: so only can love go the whole way (whether or no it be successful in changing the evil will) in its enterprise of liberating those enchained by the evil will.

When pain comes, even though it seems fortuitous and meaningless, the Christ-follower may—and must—take it to God as Paul took his pain, and say to Him, “Use this for Thy eternal purposes. Use it to fulfil Thy enterprise of the Cross. Use it in ways which I cannot understand to buy freedom for other men, to transform the evil will into the good.”

Pain so borne becomes a sacrament of the grace of God; and in addition—this is infinitely more important—it becomes an efficient instrument for the carrying forward of the Cross. Every pang of it, so brought to God and submitted to His purpose in Christ, is fruitful and creative, in ways about which the sufferer himself will never know anything—for the release of others.

Repeated again and again throughout the writings of St. Paul we find another line of thought regarding the significance of pain. It is something to be proud

of, to be boasted about. The scars of pain are honourable scars, to be borne joyfully by the warrior of Christ.

It will be a poor follower of the Crucified Christ who after years spent in his Master's service has not a few such scars to show for his campaigns—a few old wounds which will not fully heal, but from time to time make themselves felt again, to remind him once more of the One whom he follows, and of what the Cross meant to Him.

Thus regarded pain is a crown of honour, the pledge of our allegiance to Christ, the tangible proof that we have paid a little at least of the hard eternal price of redemption. Pain is, from this point of view, a thing without which in our lives we should indeed be ashamed and disgraced, as soldiers in a warfare where, after our Leader has paid with His life for the cause, we have paid nothing, but rather made profit.

The Cross means that pain is a sign of fellowship in Christ's creative activity, and that the absence of pain is a proof that we have borne no share in that activity. Suffering is an essential accompaniment of any creative or regenerative work; and if we do not accept our share of it, we are cowards and shirkers.

Moreover, the Cross means that pain, rightly borne, is vicariously effective, for the lightening of the pain of others. When pain bit home upon

him, Paul reminded himself—and found deep comfort herein—that he was bearing it for the sake of his brethren. He switched his mind off from the pain, however insistent it might seem to be, and set it on the men for whose sake the pain had been incurred and was being suffered. He knew that the way in which he had lived, the crushing burden of responsibility which he had continuously borne, the persecutions which the service of Christ had made inevitable, had worn him out, and had brought this pain upon an exhausted and battered physique. Therefore he could hold his pain up to Christ, as an offering to Him, to be consecrated by Him, and used for Him and for His needy world. Even when imprisonment or physical collapse seemed to make active service for Christ impossible, and held Paul in what must have been an infuriating immobility, he comforted himself by this thought, that the pain was suffered vicariously.

The Cross means, again, that the Christian community, and the individual Christian believer, serves a defeated, suffering, tortured Lord: and serves Him by drinking in His own spirit, and by adopting so far as this is possible His own methods. When the individual or the community is called to serve Him in and through pain, then this is the highest possible honour and glory, not only because

we must so love Him that we cannot desire to have a different lot from His, but because we are conscious that unless we so serve Him in pain, we are no true followers of His and are unworthy of Him and of His calling.

To suffer, if suffering is borne in the right spirit and is offered to Christ as the free and joyful oblation of faithful hearts, is in itself a mysterious assurance of inner union with our Master, and of a fuller existence, in which we shall share His life eternally.

In the account of Paul's conversion the following words occur, "I will let him know what great suffering he must pass through for my sake" (Acts ix. 16). As Paul looked back in after years at this crucial event in his life, and at the long series of deprivations, persecutions, losses of health and friends, increasing feebleness and anguish, to which it had been the prelude, he reminded himself with joy that these things had been definitely laid upon him by Christ Himself, to be endured cheerfully and constructively for His sake.

Paul loved his Master so much, and realised so deeply that his Master was essentially One who suffered, that he would have been miserable and heartsick if he had not been called upon thus to bear something of Christ's suffering, at Christ's behest, and by Christ's side.

He had been brought into the mysterious inward knowledge that God's eternal purpose so works, and only so works, that life is bought by death, and joy by subjection to suffering.

If this process had not bitten home upon Paul's own personal life, binding him also to the same wheel of suffering whereon his Master had been bound (and was eternally bound in His self-identification with suffering mankind), then Paul would have known that he was too weak, too craven to be adjudged worthy of Christ's highest mark of trust and fellowship.

The fact that he was called upon to suffer with, and for, Christ was thus to Paul the highest possible proof of the Divine trust in him and love for him, His suffering was the outward and visible sign of Christ's commission of apostleship. The Cross of suffering vicariously borne was not only the principle ruling his life and the one means by which evil could be defeated and good established. It was also the highest crown of glory, fruitful and splendid, the sign and mark of a Divine calling.

But there was a deeper significance even than this in Paul's experience of suffering. When he suffered, he knew that his pain came to him as a sacrament of His Master's own presence. He knew that he had been called by Christ into this pathway of pain: that the treading of it was the manner in

which Christ was showing His trust in Paul, and His belief in the worthiness and ability of Paul to share in the task of redemption, which means eternally the Cross of pain. When his suffering came over him in a flood, and he was stung into bitter remembrance of what he had lost, Paul hastens to remind himself that every pang of agony and deprivation was just the proof of his Master's love and trust, the seal of His commission. But more than this, such pain was a ministering to Paul of the life-giving fact—a source of the deepest joyfulness—that Christ, the Cross-bearer, was with him, and he with Christ. The more he suffered, the more effectively was the ideal realised “That I may know Him and the fellowship of His sufferings.” Paul found Christ in his pain, felt through it the strength and vigour of Christ's arm around him, the certainty of Christ's presence, the very life of Christ flowing through him and enabling him to bear his pain. Thus his pain brought him sacramentally ever closer and closer to his Master.

It was in this way that Paul had come into the experience which had been spoken of by Christ Himself, when He said to His two disciples, “Out of the cup from which I am to drink you shall drink, and with the baptism with which I am to be baptised you shall be baptised.” The Cross had become to Paul an eternal principle ruling all his

life—and it was a principle by which evil was conquered and good established through suffering freely and courageously borne.

This principle of the eternal Cross, of which the historical Cross on Golgotha was the unique and perfect exemplification, had been foreshadowed, as Paul frequently points out, more and more definitely throughout the history of the Jewish race.

The documents comprised in the Old Testament constitute a unique record of a unique phenomenon, the evolution of a primitive tribal cult into a universal ethical monotheism. As we study the meaning of these documents, we are struck by two phenomena especially: on the one hand the steady raising of man's estimate of God's character, a process which is to be expressed, from the Godward side, as the progressive revelation of the Divine nature; and on the other hand the immense influence exerted on this development by the experience of individual and national suffering.

So much is this the case that it is not an exaggeration to say that if their history be regarded as a whole, the Jews are seen to have learnt more about God than their neighbours because they suffered more, and because they had amongst them a long series of master-sufferers, the Prophets, who could tell them what their suffering meant.

Hosea was in some ways the prince of all these

master-sufferers. His bitter experience of acute personal suffering had come to him in connection with his wife's unfaithfulness, and with his own vain efforts to win her back to loyalty and purity. Perhaps the crucial point of all pre-Christian history is that at which the conviction flashes in upon Hosea's mind that God will deal even more tenderly and redemptively with His erring people than Hosea himself had dealt with his fallen wife.

Here we have the 'sense of God in history' emerging almost fully developed from the very start, and intimately bound up with the emergence of the conception of the eternal Cross. As Hosea had suffered and agonised patiently, in order to win back his wife: so God would, and must, suffer and agonise patiently, in order to win back His people.

Hosea is typical of his great successors in the fact (apprehended dimly no doubt, but still with increasing clearness) that he has learnt to look along history, and to see a Purpose coming from far back, and extending far forward into the future, a Purpose which is essentially the showing upon the stage of history of God's own character and likeness, through the principle of the Cross, which is patient, suffering, redemptive love.

The great prophets saw in the life-story of their people—and we may see the same vision with them

—God schooling humanity into the knowledge that He is the Father of all mankind; that He is holy, and merciful, and loving: and even (deepest mystery of all) that He suffers to redeem the lost.

The very greatest of the prophets are able also to declare that, grievous as had been the suffering laid upon what had truly become a martyr-nation, it had been transcendently worth while. Through invasion, massacre and wholesale deportation the Jewish people had been welded into the Church of the one universal loving God. They were a community in which the conception of the Cross was at least launched: in which this man and that had seen something of the sovereign glory and efficacy of defenceless suffering love, as the only means by which wrong could be righted, the lost redeemed, and the evil will changed into good. Thus they were becoming a fitting environment—indeed the only possible environment—for the incarnation of God in the Man of Sorrows.

When Paul spoke, in the eighth chapter of Romans, of the clash in his time of two world-orders, the ancient world-order of futility and ruin, and the new world-order of the 'manifestation of the sons of God,' that is, of emergent Christlikeness, he was summing up the whole message of the ancient prophets, and expressing it anew for a world which had known Christ and the Cross. His keen gaze saw clearly what the prophets had

seen dimly before him, the truth that suffering lies at the heart of the process by which the new world-order conquers the old. As Christlikeness is worked out amongst men, under the invincible stimulus of the Spirit of the Living Christ, *the process costs*. It costs the Cross, not once only on Golgotha, but all along the line of history, in generation after generation. Progress is won by those who can say (or rather, about whom it can be said) 'I fill up the sufferings of Christ'; for it is these men who through their sufferings enable the redemptive activity of the Spirit of Christ to reveal Christ more and more thoroughly in every sphere of human relationships.

In the Bible as a whole we thus see, first, the martyr-nation winning through its sufferings fresh knowledge of the nature and will of God: next, the martyr-God revealing His being through a human life: and then the process beginning, by which the likeness of Christ—the 'manifestation of the sons of God' is more and more perfectly worked out in all human affairs, through the agency of those who suffer patiently and vicariously in the spirit of the Cross.

It is a philosophy of history, of eternal scope, beginning amongst tribal nomads, and widening out to include all humanity, in all ages.

Above all, it is a philosophy of history to which the Cross is absolutely central.

As Paul looks back upon his life—a life lived under the ruling of this ‘philosophy of the Cross’—he finds that all his sufferings are swallowed up in the wealth and splendour of his experience of Christ. He writes from his Roman prison to the Philippians: “All that was gain to me, for Christ’s sake I have reckoned it loss. Nay, I even reckon all things as pure loss because of the priceless privilege of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for the sake of whom I have suffered the loss of everything, and reckon it all as mere refuse, that I may win Christ and be found in union with Him” (Phil. iii. 7–9).

Paul had flung away the advantages with which he had started upon life—social position, inherited gifts, a liberal education, probably some considerable wealth, influential friends, and so forth. He had become an outcast, a dangerous dreamer, a ‘fanatic.’ He had become poor, broken in health, hated by his fellow-countrymen, a laughing-stock to men of education and refinement for his vulgar and disreputable associates. In all these respects, and in many others (for example, the scourgings which he had endured), he had made himself the victim of a concentrated agony of suffering, mental, physical, spiritual.

Yet he looks back upon his life; and he declares that what he has lost and suffered is not worth one moment’s consideration, because of the love of Christ which had come into his life in consequence

of his renunciation. The presence of Christ, and the friendship of Christ, had been to him, not only a reward for all that he had lost, but a good, a value, whose very existence made all other goods, and values, sink into insignificance and disrepute.

Paul's Cross-bearing had resulted almost automatically from his relationship to Christ. This latter was the main phenomenon.

We are thus brought to see the Cross as an eternal principle—suffering freely borne for the sake of others. We see such suffering redeeming men into Christlikeness, changing the evil will into the good, working joyfully and victoriously for the establishment of a new world-order of right moral relationships. We see it founded in, motivated by, bearing fruit in, a spirit of trustful love for Jesus Christ, and a following of his example set upon Golgotha.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CROSS IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY

The Christian Church conquered the Roman world by the Cross—by suffering patiently, in trustful dependence upon Christ, the worst pain and oppression which hatred and evil could bring against her.

Generation after generation her martyrs bore the Cross; and in the long run the spirit of the Cross which they represented proved irresistible. Patient endurance of wrong had its inevitable effect. The wrong was vanquished; and the evil will was slowly transformed into a good will.

Then came a fresh trial. The Roman world, in which Christianity had thus won its place by suffering, was overthrown by the barbarian tribes. Culture, art, refinement, literature, almost all the higher values of life, were destroyed in the vast holocaust which consumed the ancient civilisation; and the Church was left to face a world of primitive savagery, stripped of all material protection.

Just at that supreme crisis, a supremely great man wrote a supremely great book. Augustine perished before the onset of the Vandals, notoriously the most ruthless of the barbarian invaders. But not till he had written the *City of God*, which is

in effect a philosophy of history founded upon the Cross. In that book Augustine declared that the world-order of force and greed is eternally opposed to the world-order of self-renunciation: and that progress results as the latter conquers the former. Such conquest is effected, not by arms and warfare, but by the methods of Jesus Christ, by the application of that principle of suffering love which is the Cross. He asserted that the fall of the Roman Empire was due to the sins of the Empire; and he had the courage to hail that world-shaking catastrophe, in which he himself was soon to become fatally involved, as a blessing in disguise, because it would clear the ground for the building of a new world-order founded on the Will of Christ, which is the Cross.

The Mediaeval Church was profoundly influenced by the conception of the Two Cities, as originated by Augustine. In many ways that Church performed miracles in the effort to establish the City of God on earth. Her achievement may be dated from the famous incident which occurred in A.D. 452. In that year the Huns under Attila were marching upon Rome. The city had been left defenceless. The Pope, Leo the Great, went out to meet the barbarians, and persuaded them to turn back. The success of the Pope's mission on that occasion showed that there is a power in the world which is superior to any organisation

of force, and which can defeat the evil will merely by its wielder's readiness to suffer anything, in his own person, in order that those in desperate need may be saved, and the evil will be turned into good.

The spirit which had inspired the early Christian martyrs, and had enabled them to win the Empire by their fearless suffering, lasted on with power into the long vista of nearly one thousand years during which the Church was winning the barbarians. Such a book as C. H. Robinson's *Conversion of Europe* is filled with the records of saints and missionaries who carried the Cross to the pagans, not merely by their preaching of a distant historical event, but often far more effectively by their lives. They went out defenceless, prepared to suffer anything in their ambition to bring something of goodness, beauty and truth to the followers of depraved and often blood-thirsty cults. In innumerable cases their reward was desperate suffering, serenely borne, and in the end martyrdom. Nothing could stand against such a spirit, so effectually embodied in practical action. The Cross went forward conquering and to conquer; its victory was demonstrated not so much in the fact that the barbarian populations became nominally Christian, as in the fact that the example of suffering love given by the missionaries bore fruit in a steady

raising of character and spirit amongst the tribes to whom they went.

Even before the collapse of the Western Empire an incident occurred, which may be legendary, but which none the less shows the idealism of the Cross, as applied to the refinement of barbarous institutions, in this case surviving from the Empire itself. The better mind of mankind had for long revolted against the gladiatorial shows, which were, however, so popular with the common people that in spite of their savage and depraved character they for long survived the Christianisation of Rome. They are said to have been finally ended by a singularly striking application of the method of the Cross. An Eastern monk, named Telemachus, travelled to Rome under the conviction that it was the Will of God that the shows should be stopped. Leaping down into the arena between the ranks of combatants, he was killed on the spot; but his self-sacrifice led to a change in popular opinion, and made it possible for the imperial government to abolish the games.

It was in this same spirit, and often by strikingly similar methods, that the barbarian tribes were gradually won, by a long succession of servants of the Cross, to a life of comparative order and refinement. The process was slow. It was nowhere complete. But when the results of a thousand years

of work are surveyed together, the method of the Cross will be seen to have accomplished miracles.

In spite of its glaring faults, the Church of the Middle Ages applied this primitive Christian principle with astonishing eventual success. It did so mainly through the agency of obscure individuals, and especially groups of individuals, who penetrated ever deeper and deeper into the recesses of heathendom, not so much preaching as living the Cross, by their practice of humble suffering love.

A typical instance of the working of this spirit may be found in the death of Boniface, the great English missionary to Germany in the eighth century: "The pagan Frisians resolved to put an end at once to the missionaries and their work. . . . They rushed upon the Christians, who numbered fifty-two, brandishing their spears. Whilst some of the members of Boniface's party prepared to defend him, he . . . thus addressed the Christians: 'Cease, my children, from conflict, and put aside your purpose of battle, for by testimony of the Scriptures we are bidden to return not evil for evil but good for evil. For now is the long-desired day, and the voluntary time of our departure is at hand. Be strong therefore in the Lord, and suffer willingly that which He permits. Set your hopes on Him, and He will deliver your souls.'" To the priests and deacons and those of inferior order

vowed to the service of God, speaking as with the voice of a father, he said: "Brothers, be of brave mind, and fear not those that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul that has an endless life, but rejoice in the Lord and fix on Him the anchor of your hope. He will forthwith give to you for ever your reward, and will grant to you a seat in the hall of heaven with the angelic citizens on high. . . . Receive with constancy this momentary blow of death, that ye may reign with Christ for ever." The pagans forthwith rushed upon the little band of Christians, and killed them."

It was such lives, and such deaths, rather than the schemings of ecclesiastical imperialists, which brought about the gradual recivilising of Europe under the sway of what was at any rate a partially Christian idealism.

Meanwhile there were springing up all over the Continent a multitude of religious houses, in which a splendid and determined effort was made, extending through many centuries of time, and affecting the lives of many millions of individual Christians, to make possible an existence of self-renunciation. We all know the faults of the monastic system, and the abuses to which it lay open. We do not, however, always realise that many religious houses constituted for ages little enclaves of unselfishness, piety and the good life, in the midst

of surrounding wastes of anarchy. They were inhabited by men who had very literally taken upon them the Cross, turning their back upon all earthly advantage, stripping themselves of the means of material protection and well-being, and devoting constant efforts to the alleviation of the misery around them through loving service.

Again and again the purity of the idealism of the Cross was reawakened during the thousand years of the Mediaeval epoch; and was expressed through the development of some new monastic or missionary order. It was an age of appalling sin against the Cross, an age in which the Central organisation of Christendom showed itself callously willing to use the basest weapons of force and of secularism for the attainment of its spiritual ends. It was the age of the Imperial Papacy, of the Crusades, of the development of the Inquisition, of the savage conflict between Papacy and Empire—a conflict which the Papacy won by calling to its aid the rising power of nationalism, with the fitting result that the Pope himself soon afterwards became prisoner at Avignon to the very force which he had evoked. But it was also the age of faith. It sinned most grievously against the Cross: and yet at the same time it saw the Cross and its meaning with dazzling distinctness, and it bred by the thousand lives consecrated with peculiar power and beauty to the following of the Cross.

Above all, it was the age which gave birth to St. Francis.

The Franciscans, and pre-eminently St. Francis himself, made the discovery that the suffering which is the inevitable method and accompaniment of the Cross, is a thing which in itself is beautiful and joyous. They named this suffering Poverty; and they embraced Poverty in no morbid spirit of self-immolation, but zealously and ardently, in the atmosphere of chivalry, as 'the fairest bride in the world.'

St. Francis himself, speaking of the suffering of the Cross under this aspect, said to Brother Masseo: "Dearest companion, let us pray St. Peter and St. Paul to teach and help us to possess the immeasurable treasure of most holy poverty; for she is a treasure so all-worthy and so divine, that we are not worthy to possess her in our most lowly vessels; inasmuch as she is that heavenly virtue through which all things earthly and transitory are trampled underfoot, and every obstacle is removed from before the soul, in order that it may freely unite itself with God eternal. This is that virtue which makes the soul, while still placed on earth, converse in heaven with the Angels. This is she who accompanied Christ upon the Cross: with Christ she was buried, with Christ she rose again, with Christ she mounted into heaven: and it is she who, even in this life, gives to the souls who

are enamoured of her the means of flying to Heaven: inasmuch as she guards the weapons of true humility and charity. And therefore let us pray the most holy Apostles of Christ, who were perfect lovers of this evangelical pearl, that they beg for us this grace from Our Lord Jesus Christ, that, by His most holy mercy, He may grant us to merit to be true lovers and observers and humble disciples of the most precious and most beloved evangelical Poverty” (*Fioretti*, xiii).

This passage is highly characteristic of the zealous and joyful attitude adopted by Francis and his companions towards the suffering which is the deepest principle of the Cross. They did not merely bear that suffering patiently, sacrificing themselves for others in a spirit of austere resignation. They personified their suffering as Poverty, and they embraced it rapturously. They believed it to be in itself a treasure beyond all computation, and the highest possible good.

As they passed through the world, ragged, penniless and shelterless, in pursuance of their founder’s precept “Naked carry the naked Cross,” these early Franciscans made the way of the Cross beautiful and flowery. They sang the songs of the troubadours about the suffering of the Cross, so that all good men envied them that suffering, and thousands came to join their ranks. They brought a new element into Christianity, a constructive and

positive attitude towards all suffering which is vicarious and redemptive. They showed, to all time, that such suffering is not something dark and dreadful, however bitter it may be, but that it is a thing supremely joyous and splendid. The whole attitude is summed up in the exquisite story of Francis's marriage to Poverty.

In the course of the seven centuries which have passed since the rise of the Franciscans there have been a variety of movements within the body of Christendom which have brought back in power the message of the Cross, not as a mere doctrine concerning an event which happened in the distant past, but as a living and powerful weapon for the righting of wrong and the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the present.

The records of the missionary pioneers of both the Catholic and the Protestant communions are full of incidents showing fearless bearing of the Cross. The martyrdoms of the early Jesuit missionaries: the courage of such men as Paton, Williams and Chalmers in the South Seas: and the long history of missionary heroism in China, all bear witness to the fact that the Cross is still mighty. In a hundred different regions it has been proved that 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.' In a hundred also it has been proved that once institutionalism creeps in, it stifles

the true spirit of Cross-bearing, by subtly transferring loyalty from Christ and His idealism of the Cross to a man-made organisation.

Yet in the main the missionaries have borne the Cross well, because they have been delivered from a repetition of the calamity which overtook Christianity when Constantine made it the state-religion of the Roman Empire. A great modern Christian has written thus of that disaster: "The conversion of Constantine was the greatest calamity which ever happened to the Church. 'Conquer by this.' Surely none can conquer by this save by dying upon it. Up to that time martyrs looked to the Cross that they might have divine strength to follow their crucified Redeemer. Thenceforward the benefits of Christ's Passion came to be regarded rather as a security for a future life than as an elevating power by which they might glorify God on earth. . . . Christianity triumphed in name but the world triumphed in power."

This quotation admirably brings out the fact that the Cross is more than a symbol of faith, or a badge of orthodoxy. It is a living principle. Constantine, or the ecclesiastics of his own time and later ages, believed that he had won the critical battle which gave him world-power because the Cross as a symbol had consecrated his arms. In reality that conquest, resulting in the raising of Christianity to dominant power, was the worst

possible thing which could have happened for the true religion of Christ. Men's minds largely forgot the Cross as the living principle of patient and suffering love, which had inspired actively and creatively the early martyrs and saints.

In the main, however, the modern missionary has been delivered from a repetition of this calamity. He has been left severely alone by governments. Not infrequently, to the great advantage of his work, he has been ill-treated or even persecuted by governments. Where, as in British India, his religion has been the religion of the governing race, even in spite of government neutrality in matters of religion he has frequently realised himself to be grievously handicapped by the connection.

In not a few areas the missionary has been able to live out the principle of the Cross, as a patient sufferer of wrong, completely stripped of any material defence. By such a life he has been successful in founding securely the Christian community of the future, as a strong, self-reliant and self-propagating movement. But where he has been regarded, however unfairly, as the pampered favourite of an alien government, the community which he has built up has been de-nationalised, pauperised and almost sterile. The reason for the difference is this and this alone—in the one case he has been able, however incompletely, not merely to preach the Cross but (and this is far more

important) to live by the Cross. In the other case his preaching has been rendered nugatory by his position.

The distinction in question may be illustrated by the difference in spirit between the missionary who champions British ascendancy in India: and his brother-missionary who lives in daily peril of his life in China. And the distinction is illustrated also by the difference in spirit between the Christian communities originating from the labours of the one and the other.

The 'Holy Experiment' of William Penn and his fellow Quakers in the early days of Pennsylvania still presents the best Western example of the application of the principle of the Cross to the problems of political life. At a time when the other English settlements on the eastern sea-board of what is now the United States were struggling against the Red Indians in a series of sanguinary wars, Penn took the radical, and apparently almost suicidal, step of establishing his settlements without military defences, solely relying upon the protection of integrity, peacefulness and brotherhood as practised by his Quaker settlers.

The 'Experiment' endured for some two generations, during which time Pennsylvania was marvellously immune from the horrors of Indian warfare which periodically decimated the neighbouring settlements. Only when Penn's policy was finally

abandoned, and armed protection was instituted, did the colonists begin to suffer in this way.

In the other North American colonies the faith of the Quakers was frequently put to the test during the long-continued troubles with the Red Indians. On various notable occasions the method of the Cross was carried into triumphant operation, often by poor and obscure people.

For example, the following incident occurred: "The back settlements, far away from towns or any assistance, were an easy prey for the prowling bands of savages, and the people lived in constant dread. Every evening brought tidings of massacre and slaughter, and every night the settlers barricaded their houses as strongly as they could, and lay down with their weapons beside them, even then being scarcely able to sleep for fear. One of these solitary houses was inhabited by a Friend and his family. They had always lived in perfect security and peace with all around, both red and white, and having no apprehension of danger, had neither bolt nor bar to their door. The only means of securing their home from intruders was by drawing in the leathern thong by which the wooden latch inside was lifted from without. Even this precaution was never used—they slept peacefully in the log-cabin knowing full well that friend or foe could enter at any time by simply pulling the thong.

When the massacres began they discussed the

advisability of withdrawing the thong at nights as a precaution against any enemy there might be about, but believing as they did that God had protected them until now and would continue to do so, for a long time they made no change. One night, however, alarmed by the dreadful rumours, they yielded to their fears, and before retiring to rest drew in the thong and so secured themselves as well as they were able. In the middle of the night the Friend, who had been tossing restlessly, asked his wife if she were asleep. She replied that she could not sleep, for her mind was uneasy. He confessed that he could not either, and that he would feel safer if they put the string out as usual. She urged him to do so, and they lay down again, putting their trust wholly in God once more. Ten minutes later a dreadful war-whoop echoed through the forest, bringing fear to every heart, and almost immediately afterwards the Friends counted the footsteps of seven men pass the window of their room, which was on the ground floor. The next moment the string was pulled, the latch lifted and the door opened. A few minutes' conversation took place, but as it was in the Indian language, it was unintelligible to them. The result of it, however, was that the door was closed again, and the Indians retired without having crossed the threshold. In the morning the smoking ruins of their neighbours' houses were seen.

Some years afterwards, when peace was restored, and the colonists had occasion to hold conferences with the Indians, this Friend was appointed as one for that purpose, and speaking in favour of the Indians he related the above incident. In reply an Indian arose and said that he himself had been one of that marauding party, and that it was the simple circumstance of putting out the latch-string, which proved confidence rather than fear, that had saved their lives and their property. When the door was found to be open, they had said to one another, "These people shall live, they will do us no harm for they put their trust in the Great Spirit."¹

A better-known incident is that of the party of Red Indians, on the war-path, who came with murderous intent to a Quaker meeting. 'They passed to and fro by the open door of the house looking inquisitively within at the quiet worshippers. At last having satisfied their curiosity, they quietly entered the meeting. They were met by the chief Friends with the outstretched hand of peace, and shown to seats, where they sat in reverent silence till the close of the meeting. The leading man of the Society then hospitably invited them to a meal at his house, and they were generously entertained and refreshed. As they were going, the Indian chief took his host aside, and

¹ See *The Arm of God*, by E. and R. Dunkerley.

promised him and his people perfect security from the ravages of the red man. He said, "When Indian come to this place, Indian meant to tomahawk every white man he found. But when Indian found white man with no guns, no fighting weapons, so still, so peaceable, worshipping Great Spirit, the Great Spirit say in Indian's heart—no hurt them, no hurt them!"

In the life-story of George Fox, the founder of the Quaker community, there are a number of incidents to be found illustrating the method of the Cross. Thus on one occasion, when he was attacked by a man with a naked sword in his hand, Fox looked stedfastly at him and said, "Alack for thee, poor creature, what wilt thou do with thy carnal weapon? It is no more to me than a straw." The words and the look were enough.

On another occasion, when a meeting was in progress, a company of soldiers rushed in with drawn swords. One of the soldiers had sworn to kill Fox, and 'pressed through the company' to within six feet of him; but suddenly he sheathed his sword and made off; "For the Lord's Power came over all and chained him and the rest, and we had a blessed meeting."

Even more remarkable is the case of Thomas Lurting, a sailor, who met some Quakers and became much impressed by their patience under

ill-treatment. He eventually became a Quaker himself; and during a fight against the Spaniards at Barcelona he became convinced of the folly and wickedness of war. "The word of the Lord ran through me. How if I had killed a man? and it was with such power that I hardly knew whether I was in the body or out of it. But I turned about and put on my clothes" (he would be serving his gun stripped to the waist), "and walked on deck in great exercise of mind." The captain was (not unnaturally) enraged, and announced that he would kill any man who refused to fight. He had a notice put up, "If any man flinch from his quarters in time of engagement, any may kill him." Soon afterwards, on the occasion of another engagement, Lurting and the other Quakers assembled in the most public place on the deck in full view of the captain, and began to hold a quiet meeting. The captain was furious, and made towards them with a drawn sword in his hand. Lurting says, "No sooner was his sword drawn, than the word of the Lord ran through me like fire saying The sword of the Lord is over him, and if he will have a sacrifice, proffer it to him! This word was so powerful in me that I greatly quivered and shook. But I was not afraid of the sword, and when the shaking was a little over, I turned my head over my shoulder and said to a friend, 'I must go to the captain!' Then, watching the captain as he

came forward with his drawn sword in his hand, I fixed my eye upon him, and with a great dread of the Lord upon my mind I stepped towards him, and he furiously looked on me, to have daunted me, but I was carried above all his furious looks."

When he had advanced to the distance of only a few feet, the captain's expression suddenly changed. He turned pale, retreated and left the Quakers in peace. Later he sent a message of friendly conciliation.

Many remarkable incidents occurred during the course of the American Civil War illustrating the working out of the principle of the Cross. During that War the Quakers in the Southern States, where conscription was rigorously enforced, suffered grievous persecution because of their refusal to bear arms. One of them, Seth W. Laughlin of North Carolina, was kept without sleep for a long period, a soldier standing close at hand to awaken him with a bayonet if he should doze off. He was cruelly bound for three hours a day; and was hung by his thumbs for an hour and a half. These methods proving unavailing, he was court-martialled and sentenced to be shot. The troops were ordered to watch the execution. He stood erect before the six levelled rifles, and asked permission to pray, saying, in a perfectly calm voice, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The effect upon the firing squad was extraordinary. All of them

lowered their rifles and refused to fire. The sentence of death was revoked.¹

Another Friend, William Hockett¹ of North Carolina, absolutely refused to bear arms or to do any other work necessary to the army (such as mowing grass for horses). He was violently threatened by the colonel of the regiment to which he had been attached, and was told to choose whether he would be shot at night or in the morning. He replied calmly that he was ready for death if God permitted it, but that there was a power above man's and not a hair of his head could be touched without his Heavenly Father's notice. The next day arrangements were made for his execution. Before the firing squad he prayed the same prayer, "Father, forgive them." The men refused to shoot such a man, and lowered their rifles without orders. Later, two men were ordered to bayonet him; but would not go farther than tearing his clothes and pricking him. When the officer had gone, the soldiers tried to persuade William Hockett to run away, but this also he refused. The next day, when he refused to carry his rifle, the men carried it for him themselves. Hockett even refused to help in cooking, and was told that if he would not cook, he should not eat. He was marched off hungry to another camp. On the way the window of a house opened and a

¹ See *The Arm of God*.

woman threw a large loaf of bread to him, which lasted him till the Battle of Gettysburg, where he was taken prisoner by the Federals, and soon afterwards set at liberty.

Somewhat similar experiences occurred in the case of many conscientious objectors to military service during the Great War.¹ In 1922, when the French occupied the Ruhr district for a time, the inhabitants practised against them a form of passive resistance which was inspired by the belief that wrong can be righted by a whole-hearted determination to suffer patiently the worst which wrong can do. It is true that in this case the Germans would have resisted if they could, and by force of arms, so that their efforts cannot be regarded as having been inspired by a redemptive purpose—they were indeed in a sense merely a *pis aller*. None the less the success eventually achieved by the Ruhr passive resistance demonstrates the extraordinary effectiveness of voluntarily-endured suffering.

Numerous other instances could be chosen, from many different times and places, to demonstrate the power of the way of the Cross. But it must be emphasised that the most striking of these instances have occurred when men were consciously following the teaching and example of Jesus Christ,

¹ See *Conscription and Conscience*, by J. W. Graham.

and were aware of spiritual dependence upon Him and of His redemptive purpose acting through them.

This principle is strikingly illustrated in the case of the great missionary to the South Seas, John G. Paton. Though he had no arms and was entirely at the mercy of the cannibals amongst whom he lived, Paton fearlessly denounced their cruel customs, for example, the inhuman treatment of women, the strangling of widows and the almost continuous warfare. "On one occasion a League of Blood was formed for the purpose of ridding the island of the white man, but at the critical moment in the council of war, two old chiefs—sacred men and amongst Paton's bitterest enemies—suddenly and unexpectedly came over to his side and defied the rest to touch him. Soon after that Paton persuaded twenty chiefs to form themselves into a peace party, and for a considerable time they managed to maintain peace. But a chief of one of the inland tribes was murdered, and his followers swooped down on the harbour tribes, and at once the whole place was ablaze with the war passion. Paton, anxious only to avert the impending war, went unarmed with two companions into the bush to search for the inland tribes. They passed many deserted villages, and at last came unexpectedly on a great company assembled at a feast. Immediately each man rushed for his weapons. Paton

walked straight into the middle of them and shouted, "My love to all you men of Tanna! Fear not, I am your friend!" An old chief came up and took him by the hand, and for about an hour they conversed together, the chiefs finally agreeing to give up the war, and sending him back with presents of fruit and fowls."

Paton was the means of stopping numerous other wars. One of these wars was undertaken by a party favourable to Christianity. Paton came between them and their enemies just before the battle was joined. The friendly chief begged for leave to shoot down his enemies, saying that if Paton refused it, all on their side, with Paton himself, would certainly be murdered. Paton shouted to both parties, "You may shoot or murder me, but I am your friend. I am not afraid to die. My love to you all." The result of his courage was peace.

"Paton's efforts made him many bitter enemies. They were continually planning to kill him, and his life was very uncertain from day to day. But he went about his work in perfect confidence and hope, and he was wonderfully protected and preserved in the most critical circumstances. Once a man rushed at him with an axe, but a chief, standing near, snatched a spade with which he had been working and dexterously defended him. The next day a wild chief followed him about for four hours with a loaded musket, which was often directed

towards him; but something restrained his hand. Three times one night Paton heard men trying to force the door of his house, but the next morning the report went all around the harbour that those who had tried to shoot him were 'smitten weak with fear,' and were unable to carry out their plan. Through it all Paton was calmly conscious that so long as he had work to do he would be spared to do it, and he writes of these troublous times, "It is the sober truth, and it comes back to me sweetly after twenty years, that I had my nearest and dearest glimpses of the face and smile of my blessed Lord in those dread moments when musket, club or spear was being levelled at my life."¹

This was the secret of Paton's courage, and of his success in applying the principle of the Cross. These things were founded upon the living experience of Christ's presence and friendship.

¹ See John G. Paton's *Autobiography* and *The Arm of God*.

CHAPTER THREE

INDIAWARDS

The following passage occurs in Canon Streeter's scholarly and authoritative work on *The Four Gospels*:

"The Doctrine of the Logos, as the author of the Fourth Gospel saw, made it possible to present Christianity to the educated Greek world in a way it could accept. It was the boldest 'restatement' of Christianity in terms of contemporary thought ever attempted in the history of the Church. . . . The conception of the Divine Logos, as hammered out by Philo to form a synthesis between Jewish and Neo-Platonic thought, was just the concept needed in a place like Ephesus, not only to interpret Christianity to the Greek in terms of Divine Immanence, but also to meet the standing taunt of the Jew that those who worshipped Christ were setting up a new God" (p. 468).

The development of the Logos Doctrine, here referred to, was of incalculable importance in the history of early Christianity. It rendered possible, and actual, the harnessing of the Greek intellectual genius to the service of the new Faith. It showed Christianity as the fulfilment of the highest strivings of the Greek spirit after truth, beauty and goodness.

It made what might have been, from the intellectual point of view, merely a reform movement within the obscure Jewish religion into a world-faith, whose problems in the sphere of the mind were tackled courageously, and with brilliant success, by a series of great thinkers—men whose training in Greek philosophy fitted them to become the builders of an intellectual fabric strong enough to survive the disintegrating influences of the Dark Ages.

But these considerations must not lead us into the error of imagining that the adoption into Christianity of the Logos Doctrine by the Fourth Evangelist was a piece of clever ecclesiastical tactics. He did not say to himself, "Now we Christians are in danger of remaining in a back-water amongst the Jews. We need a point of contact with the Greeks—something handy to attract them to our beliefs. We need a line of thought fitted to act as a bridge uniting two divergent world-views, those of the Jew and the Greek."

We must not suppose that the Fourth Evangelist set out, with these considerations in his mind, to explore the Ancient Greek writings, and the theories of contemporary philosophers: nor must we suppose that, after judicious balancing of the claims of other lines of thought (e.g. the Stoic system of ethics, or the ritual of the mystery-religions), he finally selected the Logos Doctrine, as the best calculated to serve his purpose.

The way in which he writes of the Logos convinces us that the Fourth Evangelist had learnt to regard this great conception of truth, which starts far back in Heraclitus, and comes down through Plato, the Stoics, the Neo-Platonists and Philo, not merely as a convenient point of contact with Hellenic thought, but as something livingly true in itself. He had traced the gradual expansion and enrichment of that idea down through the centuries, and had found in it something which immensely strengthened and deepened his own thought about God and his own experience of Christ.

The Fourth Evangelist did not merely pounce on the Logos Doctrine, with a shout of delight, crying, "This will be useful." He said to himself, as he knelt, "This is *true*. This will teach us more about Christ than we have ever known before."

He was not alarmed by the fact that the Logos Doctrine was Greek in origin, nor by the inevitable connection between that Doctrine and various 'heathen' conceptions and practices. He was honest in following truth as he saw it. He accepted the Doctrine as *true*, and therefore as enriching vitally the existing views of Christian truth.

More than this, he saw that, since the Doctrine was true, Christianity *must have it*, would indeed perish without it. And thus he, and those who thought with him, took the vitally important step

of welcoming the Greek philosophical thought into the heart of Christianity.

In so doing they performed three essential services on behalf of Christianity. They vastly enriched the Christian conception of Christ, showing us the Eternal Christ and the Inward Christ. They harnessed the Greek mind to the service and support of the Christian Faith. And thirdly, as a consequence of this, they saved Christianity from the extinction which must have overtaken it had it lacked that service and support.

Hence the Fourth Gospel has been well called the truest because the most spiritual. It deals less than the Synoptics with historical incident; but it shows us Christ as He had come to be known by a Christ-worshipper of the highest spiritual genius, who had learnt to look upon His Lord with Greek as well as with Jewish eyes, and thus to see Him in His universal and eternal significance.

In August 1930 occurred the fifteen-hundredth anniversary of the death of the greatest of all Africans, the most majestic and universal figure produced either by the races of the African continent or by the Christian Church after its first generation.

Augustine died besieged by the fiercest and most destructive of the advancing hordes of barbarians—the notorious Vandals—in the little town of Hippo,

which he had chosen as the centre of a lifetime of humble and Christlike service. He died surrounded by a universal catastrophe, the wholesale destruction of the ancient civilisation. A century before his time another great African, Tertullian, had said of the Roman Empire, "This alone stands between us and the end of the world." Augustine saw the end come and was unafraid. He sustained undismayed the ruin of civilisation around him; for he saw beyond the devastation caused by the barbarian invasions to the possibility of building a new civilisation, and a more Christlike one, on the ground which had thus been cleared. His faith and vision were such that they could pierce beyond the smoke of Vandal watch-fires to the far-off day when mankind should be ruled by the laws of Christ. In his great book *The City of God* he showed the principles which must be followed if that process of world-reconstruction were to be carried through successfully and permanently. Through his influence on the creation of the mediaeval world-polity, and especially through the power which his ideas exerted over such men as Charlemagne and Pope Gregory VII, he may justly be regarded as the greatest of all world-builders; and his thought in *The City of God*, although it has frequently been misinterpreted and misapplied, still has significance for us to-day.

But Augustine was more than a philosopher of

history (though he was perhaps the greatest of all such philosophers). He was a truly catholic spirit. For nine years he had been the devotee of an Oriental cult. Then he had become an ardent Platonist. Finally he was converted to the truth and beauty of Christ, and worshipped Him as Fulfiller not only of all the highest in Jewish religion, but of all the highest in Greek religion also. African in origin, Augustine became European in intellectual and Asiatic in spiritual affiliation; and perhaps partly for this reason his great books still have a vital significance for the whole world. Not only was he the chief builder, in his *City of God*, of the ideas which controlled the Mediaeval world—from which our own modern world sprang; but his *Confessions* are for all ages and for all races of mankind the classical record of spiritual pilgrimage.

Augustine is frequently thought of as a pillar of orthodoxy: as the scourge of heretics, the fierce opponent of Donatists and Manichees: as the originator of a cast-iron scheme of dogma, which lays onerous insistence upon predestination and original sin. In a sense this commonly received opinion is justified. Augustine, under certain aspects of his many-sided personality, was an arch-dogmatist and the very fountain of strictest Catholic orthodoxy. Yet it must be remembered that in the *Confessions* Augustine says, "Cicero's *Hortensius*" (a philosophical treatise, now lost, but dealing largely with

Platonism) “quite altered my affection, turned my prayers to Thyself, O Lord, and changed my purposes and desires. All my vain hopes I thenceforth slighted: and with an incredible zeal of spirit I thirsted after the immortality of wisdom, and began to rise up that I might return to Thee. How did I burn then, my God, to fly from earthly delights to Thee” (*Con.* III, 4).

Indeed, as we read the *Confessions*, we are compelled to recognise that Augustine’s conversion—using that term in Christ’s sense, the sense conveyed by the Greek word translated ‘repentance,’ which means in reality ‘change of ideals’—took place not primarily in the famous garden at Milan, but considerably earlier, when he began seriously to read the Platonists. His ideals were changed then; his will was surrendered at Milan, and so he became able to follow in action the ideals which he had already intellectually embraced.

Again, in his last book, the *Retractationes*, in which he reviews his life-work and gives his final pronouncements on his life’s opinions, Augustine says, “The very thing which is now called the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and never failed from the beginning of the human race up to the coming of Christ in the flesh. Then the true religion which already existed, began to be called Christianity” (*Retract.*, I, 13).

This pronouncement may remind us of the words

of Justin Martyr, "We have already proved Christ to be the firstborn of God and the Logos, of which mankind have all been partakers: and those who lived by reason" (i.e. by spiritual discernment) "were Christians notwithstanding they were thought to be atheists. Such among the Greeks were Socrates and Heracleitus, and those like them" (*First Apology*, 46).

Similarly St. Gregory says, "John the Baptist died not in the direct confession of Christ, but for telling the truth in a matter of righteousness; yet, seeing that Christ is truth, therefore in dying for truth he died for Christ" (*Moralium in Job. lib. 28*).

Here, then, we see two of the greatest pillars of Christian orthodoxy, the Fourth Evangelist and St. Augustine, together with others of the great early Christian thinkers, not only welcoming in from the Greeks their contribution to religion, but finding Christ amongst the Greeks and other great forerunners of Christian revelation, and being led into deeper and fuller knowledge of Him and of God through the contribution made to the understanding of Christ by the Greek view of truth.

Thus it came about, as has been pointed out by Dr. T. R. Glover, that "the Church conquered the world because it appealed to a great race on its highest levels."¹

¹ *The World of the New Testament*, p. 189.

Our own generation is making contact with a world-culture far more ancient than that of the Greeks, far more enduring, far more spiritual.

We need, in our relations with India and especially with Indian religion, the same questing emancipated spirit which marked the author of the Fourth Gospel when he welcomed the Logos Doctrine into Christianity: and which marked also Augustine, and men like him, when they acknowledge the greatness of the debt which they owed to the Greeks.

Is it possible for us to-day to find anything which will act as a bridge between Indian religion and Christianity: and as a means of harnessing the Indian mind to the task of finding a fuller revelation of Christ than we have as yet found in the West?

These are daring questions to ask; but we shall not obtain a satisfactory answer to them, nor shall we do our duty either by East or West, unless we realise that they are not daring enough. We must go forward, as the Fourth Evangelist did, and as Augustine did, to ask yet more daringly, "Is there any interpretation of the meaning of Christ which we have missed: which we bitterly need: for lack of which our Western Christianity is starving?"

The Fourth Evangelist, brought up in the narrow circle of orthodox Judaism, and then living for many years in contact with what seemed likely to remain merely a reform movement in that small field, had come to realise that beyond the boundaries of his

little Jewish world there lay a vast and splendid world-interpretation of truth, which might show him and his fellow-believers a universal and eternal Christ whom they could never apprehend if their minds remained closed to Greek thought and content with Jewish-Christianity.

Augustine, trained from infancy by one who has ever remained the ideal of Christian motherhood, Monica, had found nothing in Christianity that spoke to his own need till he read the pre-Christian Platonists. Then, as he came to comprehend the true significance of the Greek thought about God and God's workmanship for beauty, truth and goodness, "with an incredible zeal of spirit I thirsted after the immortality of wisdom, and began to rise up that I might come to Thee. How did I burn then, my God, to fly from earthly delights to Thee" (*Con.*, III, 4). In consequence of this experience, Augustine's writings, and especially the *Confessions*, are shot through with Platonic conceptions, which are so employed as to give a new and permanent deepening to the whole spirit of Christian mysticism.

Have we the faith to say of Indian religion, as Augustine said of Hellenism, expressing the mature opinion of a lifetime, "The very thing which is now called the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and never failed?"

If so, what is that 'thing'?

It is obvious that in asking such questions we are showing ourselves exceedingly rash. After all, the Fourth Evangelist wrote right at the beginning of the Christian movement, when canons of orthodoxy were as yet scarcely in existence. And even Augustine lies three-quarters of the way back along the line of time which connects our own age with the first beginnings of the Faith. Is it not presumptuous for us to imagine that it is possible to use methods to-day which may have once been legitimate, or even essential, but may now be so no longer?

Every individual must work out his own answer to such questions. It can only be suggested here that the Christians of the first four centuries stood in a relation towards a great pre-Christian world-culture such as has never been repeated till our own generation, when the West has begun to awaken to the significance and the greatness of Indian thought. In a sense our *only* precedent for the right Christian attitude towards Indian religion is to be found in the attitude towards Hellenism of the Fourth Evangelist, of Augustine and of the great Christian thinkers intermediate in time between these two. We are compelled by the nature of the case to go back to the fountain-head.

It may be objected, in reply to this, that Islam, although post-Christian in origin, was, and is, a world-culture, and that Mediaeval Christianity had very definite contacts with Islam. But Islam is not

a world-culture in the sense in which Hellenism and Indian religion are world-cultures. It is a fighting-brotherhood, regimented with crushing authority, so long as it remains Islam, by a book and by organs of interpretation, which are used to impose a cast-iron discipline upon all believers. It is a religion not so much of freedom and growth as of passive submission to the inscrutable will of Allah, revealed for all time in a volume which is regarded with such abject veneration that it may not even be translated.

Moreover, as judged by the Spirit of Christ, the manner of reaction adopted by Mediaeval Christianity towards Islam was quite obviously wrong. There was no attempt made to find anything in Islam which might be a confirmation of, or a needed reinterpretation for, Christian truth: and this in spite of the fact that the Islamic spirit of brotherhood, transcending all barriers of race, caste, class or nationality, supplies an object-lesson of triumphant success in a direction in which Christianity has lamentably failed. The attitude adopted towards the new faith was in the main one of unreasoning and bigoted opposition, and was expressed on a gigantic scale in the Crusades. The relationships between Christians and Mussulmans have been poisoned ever since by the memories of the day when Godfrey de Bouillon and his followers, having at last reached Jerusalem and overcome its defences, "had the vile blood of the Saracens up to the knees

of our horses" (as Godfrey wrote to the Pope) on their way to give joyful thanks at the Holy Sepulchre.

The effort to find a contribution, and perhaps a very valuable one, to our knowledge of Christ from India is one which is sanctioned for us, and indeed enjoined upon us, by the example of the greatest of Christian thinkers during the only other period of Christian history when the Church was brought into contact with a world-culture alien to and more ancient than that of its origin, and a world-culture marked out by its long record of spiritual search as constituting a supremely high achievement of spiritual genius.

The record of the contact of Christianity with Hellenism, and the memory of the immense debts which Christianity owes to Hellenism, should make us uneasy lest, if we adopt an attitude of unbending self-sufficiency towards Hinduism, we may miss something which we and the rest of mankind grievously need. Had the Fourth Evangelist, and those who thought like him, adopted towards Hellenism the attitude that 'we have no need of anything from such heathen sources, have we not as good or better already in Judaism?' then Christianity would never have survived the Dark Ages: and the Christians of the first centuries would have been incalculably poorer in their understanding of their Master. If we adopt the same attitude towards Indian religion, we may be running an equal risk to-day.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE INDIAN SPIRIT OF DEVOTION

When the Westerner thinks at all about Indian religion, he is apt to think of it as typically pantheistic, as an austere undifferentiated mysticism, in which the effort of the soul, prolonged of necessity through long periods of intensely rigorous discipline, is to realise at last its unity with God.

We recall in this connection the ascetic who has abandoned all opportunity for joy and gain, and who sits with arms permanently extended above his head, till they wither away, or adopts some other intensely painful posture, engaged all the while in a rapt realisation of his oneness with God.

We think perhaps of the famous instance of the ascetic of this type, who was bayoneted by a British soldier at the sack of Delhi, and who exclaimed to him with his dying breath, "Thou too art He."

The West does not, however, sufficiently realise that this type of ascetic pantheism is not the only, or the chief, or the highest, expression of Indian religion. From time immemorial, in India itself, there has been waged an unrelenting warfare against such pantheism. A long series of prophets and saints has protested against the barrenness of the doctrine of an impersonal Absolute, and has affirmed

in opposition to this doctrine the religion of a personal and loving God.

This school of thought is known as the *Bhakti* school, the school of personal piety; and its writings on devotion, and the practice of devotion, constitute the living religion of India. As Dr. Otto points out in his *India's Religion of Grace*, "Wide circles of Indian piety recognise with glowing enthusiasm the way of *Bhakti* as the *only* way to God, and reject the way of monistic mysticism as damnable heresy and soul-destroying error" (p. 22).

The keynote of the monistic mysticism has been the teaching that the vast majority of mankind live only in ignorance and illusion. This has bred a spirit of Pharisaism; for release from illusion is only to be attained after most rigorous discipline by a few spiritual giants. Moreover, the release itself is a sterile and soulless extinction of all that we mean by personality. In defining the Absolute, into unity with which the released soul must come, all predicates disappear; and no qualities whatsoever, except existence, can be ascribed to the Object of spiritual search. There can be no sort of personal relationship to him (or, rather, to it); there can only be complete identity with it, which is in itself the denial of all relationship. Thus with the undifferentiated mysticism which is taught by the supreme monistic authority, that of the school of Sankara, personality disappears both in God and man, and

with it there disappear of necessity also worship, love and character.

But this monistic mysticism, which is the apotheosis of all that is negative, is not the true or characteristic religion of India. Beginning in the *Upanishads*, at least five hundred years before Christ, and going forward from that day to our own in ever-increasing power and popularity, there has been another school of thought regarding God and man, the school of *Bhakti*. The foundation of its teaching is to be discovered in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, which contains the following passage:

He who, dwelling in the soul, is yet different from it,
Whom the soul, so long as it is unillumined, does not know,
Whose body the soul is,
And who inwardly guides the soul,
He is the Inner Guide, the Immortal.¹

From that time to the present the heart of Hindu religion has been *Bhakti*, which forms in the aggregate a most splendid and precious contribution to the spiritual wealth of mankind. It has inspired a long succession of devout thinkers and singers: its mark is to be found on even the humblest Indian village: through the streets of country-towns and cities those whom it has claimed for its own pass daily: and at the great religious festivals, especially at spots regarded as exceptionally holy, tens of

¹ Quoted in Otto, *op. cit.*

thousands gather who have given up everything for the sake of *Bhakti*.

In the literature of *Bhakti* there are numerous collections of hymns, through which breathes the spirit of entire dedication to the service of a personal God. There are also many biographies of famous *Bhaktas*, written to show the manner in which they have served God and conquered sin and wrong; and there is a great mass of hortatory writings, speaking of the love and grace of God, and urging the reader to commit himself to the Divine care. There is much emphasis laid also upon the necessity for rightness of life, if God is to be pleased: "There is a sign by which one can know whether a man is religious or not. If a misfortune befalls another, notice whether thy heart is moved with sympathy for him or not, whether it suffers pain with him or the opposite. In the former case thou mayst be certain that thou art in filial relation with God, in the latter that he rejects thee."¹

It is impossible to read through even a very brief anthology of *Bhakti* religious poetry² without becoming convinced not only that there is something here which is of great interest and beauty to students of religion, but that there is something which *we* definitely need. Our Christianity would be more full and perfect if we worshipped God and Christ

¹ Quoted by Dr. Otto from *Nanjiyar*.

² E.g. Appaswamy, *Temple Bells*, Student Christian Movement.

with more of this spirit of enthusiastic devotion. Our thought regarding our Father will be thinner and poorer than it might be, till we learn from India this joyful faith, which is yet so insistent on the frailty, weakness and sinfulness of the worshipper, and on the free generosity of the Divine grace. There is expressed in this literature an insatiable yearning for God, and at the same time a glad realisation that the yearning has met fulfilment, because it is a mutual yearning—God loves man. “The ignorant say that love and God are two. No one knows that love itself is God. Whoever knows that love itself is God shall rest in love, one with God” (Tirumular, A.D. 800).

Especially notable throughout this *Bhakti* literature is the emphasis upon the Motherhood of God. It forms a line of thought which is strange to the mind of Protestant Christians, who have been trained so largely upon patriarchal Jewish traditions. But it is well that we should remind ourselves that Our Lord cannot have designed to exclude from our conception of God any element of goodness and love when he called God Father: and also that His vivid sayings regarding God’s counting the hairs of our head, and caring for our needs of food and clothing, and His defining God in terms of a parenthood which ran to meet the erring boy, kissed him delightedly, welcomed him unquestioningly, clothed him and fed him with the best, show that Christ in

speaking of God as Father meant his hearers to think of Him as One who is father and mother as well. Not improbably one of the main gifts which Indian *Bhakti* has in store for the world is a softening of that austere Jewish conception of the Divine Fatherhood, which still endures amongst us, and which makes us regard that Fatherhood too often as a stern and terrible thing.

The greatest single document of Indian *Bhakti* is the *Bhagavadgita*, which has been called the New Testament of the Hindus. The term is appropriate, except for the fact that the average Hindu pays a great deal more attention to the *Gita* than the average Christian pays to the New Testament. It would be impossible, for instance, for a Hindu to declare with a sneer that the precepts of the *Gita* cannot be put into practical application, as a distinguished British statesman declared not so many years ago that it was impossible to govern Ireland by the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. All over India to-day one may find men of every type, from distinguished lawyers and administrators down to the humblest peasants, who study the *Gita* in a spirit of reverent devotion, and endeavour with zealous piety to put its ideals into practice.

The main teaching of the *Gita* is twofold. In the first place Duty is to be done at all costs, and without ulterior motives. Again and again the worshipper is bidden to "renounce all fruits of action." This ideal

lies at the basis of the distinctively Hindu organisation of social, economic and industrial life. The individual is to work not from selfish motives, but for the sake of God and of the community.

In the second place, the lesson of personal devotion to a God who is personal, gracious and loving is taught consistently all through the *Gita*: "Freed from passion, fear and anger, filled with Me, taking refuge in Me, purified in the fire of wisdom, many have entered into my Being. . . . With mind and reason set upon Me, without doubt thou shalt come unto Me. . . . He who offereth to Me with trust and love a leaf, a flower, a fruit, a cup of water, that I accept from the aspiring soul, since it is offered with devotion and love. . . . Whatsoever thou doest, whatsoever thou offerest, whatsoever thou givest, whatsoever thou deniest thyself, do that as an offering to Me. . . . Thus shalt thou be set free from the bondage of fate: harmonised through self-forgetfulness and through striving for union with Me, thou shalt come unto Me when set free. . . . They verily who worship Me in trust and love, they are in Me and I in them. . . . Know for certain that he who trusteth and loveth Me perisheth never. . . . On Me fix thy mind: trust me: love Me: do sacrifice to Me: worship Me: harmonised thus in the Supreme Soul, thou shalt come unto Me, having Me as thy goal. . . . Whatsoever is glorious, good, beautiful and mighty, understand thou that to go forth from My

splendour. . . . By trust and love alone may I be known and apprehended, seen in my essence and entered into. . . . He who doeth his duty for Me, whose supreme good I am, My devotee, freed from selfish desire, without hatred of any being, he cometh unto Me. . . . Rest thy mind in Me: into Me let thy reason enter: then without doubt thou shalt abide in Me hereafter. . . . He who taketh equally praise and blame, who is silent, wholly content with what cometh. . . staunch in mind, full of devotion, that man is dear unto Me. . . . They verily who partake of this wisdom of immortal life, endued with faith, I their supreme object, filled with love and trust for Me, they are surpassingly dear unto Me. . . . By trust and love man knoweth Me in essence, Who and What I am: having thus known Me in essence, he forthwith entereth into the Supreme: though ever performing all actions, taking refuge in Me, by My grace he obtaineth the eternal abode. . . . Merge Thy mind in Me, trust and love Me, sacrifice to Me, worship Me—thou shalt come even to Me. I give thee my promise: thou art dear unto Me. . . . Come unto Me alone for shelter: sorrow not, I will give thee release from all thy sins.”¹

These are only a few instances, chosen almost at random, from the very large number of *Bhakti* utterances contained in the *Gita*. They will serve

¹ See Mrs. Besant's translation of the *Bhagavadgita*.

to illustrate the spirit of devotion which marks the *Bhakti* school of thought as a whole. It is devotion to a personal and loving Saviour-God; and its very existence demands inevitably a bending of the will, and therefore of the character, to follow the will of that God.

This being so, it is not to be wondered at that there are signs already plainly to be seen in India of the fact that a day is coming when this spirit of *Bhakti* shall be applied to the worship of Jesus Christ, in a manner which will reveal to the West the thinness and coldness of our own adoration of Jesus.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the greatest Indian leader of that day, Keshab Chandar Sen, who never became a Christian, said of Christ: "None but Jesus, none but Jesus, none but Jesus, ever deserved this bright, this precious diadem, India: and Jesus shall have it. . . . My Christ, my sweet Christ, the brightest jewel of my soul—for twenty years have I cherished Him in this my miserable heart. Though often defiled and persecuted by the world, I have found sweetness and joy unutterable in my Master Jesus. . . . The mighty artillery of His love He levelled against me, and I was vanquished and fell at His feet."

A younger contemporary of Keshab Chandar Sen was Ramakrishna Paramahansa, probably the greatest modern leader of the *Bhakti* religion. He exercised a profound influence upon the thought of

his own and subsequent generations, especially for the purging, renewing and spiritualising of Hindu religious observance. It is not too much to say that he gave Hinduism a social gospel. In his name philanthropic activities are still carried on in many parts of India for the uplifting of the depressed classes and the helping of the outcastes.

Ramakrishna once saw Jesus in a vision, and for three days 'could think and speak of nothing but Him.' The experience is thus described in M. Romain Rolland's life of Ramakrishna: "One day when he was sitting in the room of a friend, a rich Hindu, he saw on the wall a picture representing the Madonna and Child. The figure became alive. Then the expected came to pass according to the invariable order of the spirit; the holy visions came close to him and entered into him, so that his whole being was impregnated with them . . . Hindu ideas were swept away. . . . The spirit of the Hindu was changed. He had no room for anything but Christ. For several days he was filled by Christian thought and Christian love. . . . One afternoon in the grove of Dakshineswar he saw coming towards him a person with beautiful large eyes, a serene regard and a fair skin. Although he did not know who it was, he succumbed to the charm of his unknown guest. He drew near, and a voice sang in the depths of Ramakrishna's soul: 'Behold the Christ,¹ who shed His heart's blood for the redemption of the world, who

suffered a sea of anguish for love of men.' . . . From that time Ramakrishna believed in the divinity of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate God."

Mahatma Gandhi's writings and speeches contain numerous references to Jesus Christ and to the Gospels. For example: "I have endeavoured to study the Bible, and consider it to be a part of my Scriptures. The spirit of the Sermon on the Mount competes almost on equal terms with the *Gita* for the dominion of my heart." . . . "It was the New Testament which really awakened me to the value of Passive Resistance. When I read in the Sermon on the Mount such passages as 'Resist not him that is evil: he who smiteth thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also, and 'Love your enemies, pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven,' I was overjoyed. . . . The *Gita* deepened the impression, and Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* gave it a permanent form."

After the three weeks' fast, which he took upon himself in 1924, in order to change the spirit of hostility then existing between Hindus and Moham-medans into a spirit of good will, Mr. Gandhi requested a Christian friend of his, who was present when he broke his fast, to sing to him the well-known Christian hymn 'When I survey the wondrous Cross': and he has borne witness on other occasions to the powerful appeal which is made to him by

that hymn, and especially by its third verse. He insists that followers of his who are Christian shall show that they are true and convinced Christians: and his own work gives evidence in many respects of his desire to apply the methods of Jesus Christ, and of his conviction that the principles enunciated by Jesus Christ are still supremely true and valid.

It is significant that when, in 1922, Mr. Gandhi was arrested and tried, the trial was compared, far and wide through India, with the trial of Jesus Christ. The Hindu mind seemed to have been led, by Mr. Gandhi's work and example, to a deeper consideration than had ever taken place before of the meaning of Jesus Christ and of His standards of character and action.

Thus the case of Mr. Gandhi serves to show how the spirit of *Bhakti* may be applied, even by one who calls himself an orthodox Hindu, to the person of Christ, and may result in the reinterpretation of Christ and of His standards and principles, in a fashion which may be of importance not only for India but for the whole world.

There are numerous indications also of the manner in which Indian Christians may in the future apply the spirit of *Bhakti* to the same task of the rediscovery and reinterpretation of Jesus Christ. The name of Sadhu Sundar Singh is well known, in this connection, throughout the West. As one of his Western

biographers¹ has said, "The consequences for India of this pioneer attempt to Christianise the sadhu ideal no man can foretell. Already four hundred young men have come to Sundar Singh, passionate to follow his example. . . . Suppose then that all over India there should arise Christian sadhus. . . . In a country so open to the appeal of religion the effect might be stupendous." The secret of Sundar Singh's power in India is his *Bhakti* of Jesus Christ. He is devoted to the service of Jesus in a way which India can understand. He has abandoned everything—home, wealth, friends, prospects in life—for the sake of Christ: and he has done so, not in a spirit of austere asceticism, but out of a deep personal adoration for the Saviour. Hence he has discovered, through his *Bhakti* of Jesus Christ, a way of serving Christ which fits in with the ancient Indian tradition of renunciation; and through which therefore he can appeal to India with a hundred times the power exercised by the average Western missionary.

Those who are personally acquainted with Sadhu Sundar Singh will bear witness to the fact that they have found in his friendship a peculiarly Christlike quality. He himself has said, "From my fourteen years' experience as a sadhu for Jesus Christ I can say with confidence that the Cross will bear those who bear the Cross, until it lifts them up to heaven, into the presence of their Saviour." This Christ-

¹ Canon Streeter in *The Sadhu*, p. 251.

inspired and Christ-aimed *Bhakti* has led to a new Indian Christlikeness, and to a new Indian conception of the sovereign meaning of the Cross.

Another instance of the *Bhakti* of Jesus Christ is to be found in the life-story of the Indian Christian poet, Narayan Vaman Tilak, who at the age of fifty-five relinquished all means of support in order to become a *sannyasi*, a renouncer. He expressed his motive for so doing in the following words: "I must be free of all human agencies, except in love and service, and must be bound entirely and for all purposes to Christ and the Gospel. . . . I am a Christian *sannyasi*, which means a follower of *anuraga* (love) and never of *viraga* (the Vedantic detachment from all emotion), and will try to be and do as I am bid by the Spirit of God." At the time of this decisive step N. V. Tilak wrote the following lyric of Christian *Bhakti*:

From this day onward Thou art mine,
Brother beloved and King divine,
From this day on.

My food I'll get in serving Thee;
Thy thoughts shall be as eyes to me.
I'll live and breathe to sing Thy praise
From this time onward all my days.
Thy feet I choose, the world resign,
For Thou from this day on art mine,
Brother beloved and King divine.

To Thee I offer child and wife,¹
 My home and all my worldly life;
 To Thee this body too I bring,
 To Thee surrender everything.
 My very self henceforth is Thine.
 O take it, Lord, for Thou art mine,
 Brother beloved and King divine.

My thoughts and words are all of Thee,
 Thou—Wisdom, Joy and Liberty.
 Now Thee and me no rift can part,
 One, not in semblance, but in heart.
 Set free am I, and for me shine
 The joys of heaven, since Thou art mine,
 Brother beloved and King divine.

From this day onward Thou art mine,
 Brother beloved and King divine,
 From this day on.²

The culminating experience of Hindu *Bhakti* is that of *Samadhi*. This term signifies the state of full and unclouded vision of God which is the goal of mystical contemplation. Modern Christian mysticism in India maintains that the experience of *Samadhi* is for the Christian also, and that it forms the crown and fulfilment of the *Bhakti* of Jesus Christ. Sadhu Sundar Singh speaks much of this experience, which comes to him frequently. The

¹ I.e. consecrate. He never deserted them.

² Quoted from *Sushila and Other Poems* by N. V. Tilak in Winslow's *The Indian Mystic*: the following quotations are also taken from the same book. No translation can give the full value of Tilak's exquisite Marathi verse.

Figure of Jesus is always central to it. It is no trance, but 'a waking state, a state of concentrated capacity of thought.' It brings an indescribable joy in communion with the Saviour-Friend.

N. V. Tilak has written thus about this Christian *Samadhi*:

Ah love, I sink in the timeless sleep,
Sink in the timeless sleep!
One Image stands before my eyes,
And thrills my bosom's deep.

One Vision bathes in radiant light
My spirit's palace-halls.
All stir of hand, all throb of brain
Quivers, and sinks, and falls.¹

The same poet has written thus, under the name of Dasa (servant), concerning Christian *Bhakti*:

Once I bethought me, Thou my Guru art,
I Thy disciple, humble and apart;
Sat low before Thee thus, nor ventured near,
Schooling my soul to reverential fear.
Ah, folly mine! Thy smile upon me bent
Has shattered in a trice my fond intent.
I rose and ran to Thee, and could not check
My laughter, as I fell upon Thy neck.
In sooth, dear Lord, so winsome is Thy grace,
I cannot keep my due and proper place.
Saith Dasa, Tell me true, hath any taught
Friendship with distance ever to consort?¹

¹ Quoted from *Sushila and Other Poems* by N. V. Tilak in Winslow's *The Indian Mystic*.

And again :

As the moon and its beams are one,
So, that I be one with Thee,
This is my prayer to Thee, my Lord,
This is my beggar's plea.

As words and their meaning are linked,
Serving one purpose each,
Be Thou and I so knit, O Lord,
And through me breathe Thy speech.

O be my soul a mirror clear,
That I may see Thee there;
Dwell in my thought, my speech, my life,
Making them glad and fair.

Take Thou this body, O my Christ,
Dwell as its soul within;
To be an instant separate
I count a deadly sin.

N. V. Tilak foretells as follows the result of the Christian *Bhakti*:

Yea, at the end of pregnant strife,
Enthroned as Guru of the earth,
This land of Hind shall teach the worth
Of Christian faith and Christian life.

Such expressions of the *Bhakti* of Jesus Christ bear clearly marked upon them the signs of their descent from Hindu *Bhakti*, but they are transformed by the quality of the Personality who forms the object of worship. It must constantly be borne in mind also

that the *Bhakti* tradition forms the heart and soul of Indian religion, whereas in Christianity mysticism has always been looked upon somewhat askance by orthodox religion; even to-day the very word 'mystic' is frequently used as a term of reproach, almost identical with the terms 'heretic,' 'pantheist,' or 'unbalanced emotionalist.' No doubt the Palestinian Christians regarded the new-fangled Logos worship of the Fourth Gospel with a similar aversion.

If we take such an expression of Hindu *Bhakti* as the following, it will be plain how much Christianity may gain from a sympathetic attitude towards it:

"It is needless to lay a child in the arms of its mother: she draweth it towards her by her own instinct. Wherefore should I take thought? He that hath the charge will bear the burden. Unmasked the mother keepeth dainties for the child, in eating them herself she hath no pleasure. When it is busied in play, she seeketh it, and bringeth it in; she sitteth pressing it tightly to her breast. When it is sick, she is restless as parched corn on the fire. *Tuka saith*, 'Take no thought for the body; the Mother will not suffer the child to be harmed.' "

It is to be noticed from this quotation how the thought of human mother-love has led the poet deeper into knowledge of God's love, and in return has dignified and immortalised the human love.

The writer of this Hindu description of the nature of the Divine Love was the seventeenth-century

Marathi poet Tuka Ram. With regard to him the Indian Christian poet N. V. Tilak, to whom reference has been made above, once wrote as follows: "As for myself it was over the bridge of Tuka Ram's verse that I came to Christ." An instructive comparison might be drawn between this conversion of a Hindu to Christianity by the reading of an old Hindu poet and the influence exercised upon Augustine's mind by the reading of Cicero's treatise on Platonism (*Con.*, III, 4).

Just as the greatest of the Christian mystics have constantly laid emphasis upon the necessity not only of adoring God but of seeking to do His will and to imitate His character of goodness and love, so Indian *Bhakti* also insists upon a discipleship of spirit and character. For example, Tuka Ram himself says this, "Where pity, pardon, peace abide, there God dwells; thither He hastens to make His home, for spirit is the place of His abiding, and where these graces have free play He tarries." The spirit and character which is inculcated in the true *Bhakta* (devotee) is one which is marked pre-eminently by love. In the *Narada Bhakti Sutra*, which is an early compendium of *Bhakti* belief, probably meant to be committed to memory by ascetics, the following occurs:

By *Bhakti* we mean an intense love of God,
Love of God is like the food of immortals; for it
makes a man perfect, deathless and satisfied.

A man who loves God has no wants nor sorrows.
He neither hates nor joys nor strives with zeal
for any ends of his own.

For through love he is moved to rapture; and
through love does he attain peace, and is ever
happy in spirit.

For love is an experience pure and selfless, subtle,
unbroken and ever expanding.

A man who has once experienced love will see that
alone, hear that alone and speak that alone, for
he thinks of that alone.

The Lambeth Conference of 1930 expressed its belief that *Bhakti* is 'a real contribution of abiding spiritual value to religious thought.' There is great need that more should be done to study and interpret this body of spiritual teaching, and to welcome into the heart of Christianity the gifts which it has to give us. There dwells in the Indian mind a power of wholehearted devotion to the service of the Divine Saviour which we urgently need in Christianity; and without which our own experience of Christ, both individual and corporate, will remain inadequate.

The greatest poet of present-day *Bhakti*, Rabindranath Tagore, has expressed in the following words the root-belief of this whole school of thought: "Our Master himself hath joyfully taken upon Him the bonds of creation. He is bound in our midst for ever." The Hindu *Bhakta* constantly returns to the verses of the *Gita* which refer to the incarnation of the Supreme Being in the human and personal

Saviour-God. He rejoices in, and is devoted to, a divine being who suffers for man, in humanity, that humanity may be saved. He sees this divine being 'bound in our midst for ever.'

It is obvious how close such ideas are to the fundamental beliefs of Christianity. There is urgent need to emphasise this closeness, and to welcome the contribution thus offered. Only so shall we come to know more fully the Universal Christ.

There are large numbers of thoughtful men all over India to-day who, whilst remaining Hindus in social allegiance and endeavouring to conserve the permanently valuable elements in the Hindu view of life and religion, are yet true *Bhaktas* of Jesus Christ. The following expression of this type of mind is taken from a magazine written by college students:

"We arrive at the Divinity of Christ, not by taking the abstract idea of Deity and asserting (in deference to authority or tradition) that He is Divine, but by learning to know Him, and through that knowledge going on to the knowledge of God. We begin with Jesus, as He is presented to us in the Gospel narrative; as we meditate upon Him, He draws us with an irresistible love; through His life, which is our example: through His death, which condemns sin and made possible our forgiveness, we are drawn insensibly to trust in Him, we grow conscious of pardon, we find that we are new creatures and

that the Spirit of God is within us, filling us with a new life.”

A consideration of this Indian utterance concerning Christ will show another aspect of the contribution which the Hindu mind may be destined to make to universal Christianity, in a new interpretation of personal discipleship. A further instance of the same thing may be taken from a letter recently received by the present writer from one of these Indian *Bhaktas* of Jesus Christ: “I am keeping well by His grace. ‘The life that I now live I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.’ I am not able to keep any external law without the grace of Jesus. I wish to have abundant life in fellowship with Him.”

CHAPTER FIVE

SATYAGRAHA

In the previous chapter we have seen reason to believe that the Hindu spirit of *Bhaki*—joyful personal devotion to a personal Saviour-God, on the basis of direct mystical communion—may have a very important contribution to make to the Christianity of the future. It is even possible that if Christianity fails to make contact with the modern purified Hinduism on the right plane, a plane of mutual tolerance and teachability, Christianity may lose an essential element of life, without which it will not be able to survive into the future, even as first-century Christianity would in all probability have failed to survive had not its welcoming of the Hellenic teaching of the Divine Logos led to the harnessing of the Greek mind to the service of Christ.

But the contribution which Hinduism is destined to make to the universal understanding of Christ does not, in all probability, lie solely or even chiefly in the sphere of this radiant and beautiful personal religion. It lies also in the domain of character-in-action. Hinduism may give us a fresh understanding of the significance of the Cross, and of the manner in which the Cross should be borne victoriously for

the sake of the founding of the Kingdom of God on earth.

One of the earliest letters recorded as having been written by an Indian is that from Calamus, an Indian philosopher of Taxila (in the Panjab), to Alexander the Great, who had been constraining Calamus to action of which his conscience did not approve. The philosopher wrote as follows:

“Your friends, whose dreams even have not revealed to them our works, persuade you to lay hands and violence upon the Indian philosophers. Our bodies you may indeed remove from place to place, but our souls you will never compel to that which they do not will, any more than you can compel wood and stone to utter sounds. Fire burns fierce pain into living bodies, and destroys them; on this fire we are, for we are ever burning alive. *There is neither king nor prince who can compel us to do what we have not chosen.* Nor do we resemble the philosophers of Greece, who are busy with mere words, for the sake of publicity. With us words are the companions of deeds, they are brief, they have a different purpose, and bring us happiness and freedom.”¹

This letter forms an early expression of the principle of *Satyagraha*, which has recently come into such prominence as the controlling force behind

¹ Quoted in *Private Letters, Pagan and Christian*.

the movement for Indian independence led by Mr. Gandhi. It is recorded that Calamus, the writer of the letter, as his protest to Alexander was not successful, mounted a pyre and caused himself to be burnt alive, as the only way out of the wrong position in which the Emperor's oppressively applied power was placing him.

It is highly probable that Calamus himself was a Buddhist monk. If so, the religion to which he belonged had from its earliest beginnings laid stress upon various aspects of *Satyagraha*.

Gautama, the princely ascetic who became the Buddha and founded Buddhism, after his three visions of pain—the old man, the sick man, the dead man—formed the resolution that at whatever cost to himself he must find a means of curing pain; and he perceived also that what was needful could only be discovered through freely-endured suffering.

The memory of this sacrifice has remained in the heart of India ever since, and has been astonishingly influential in building up a habit of mind which is not only eager to renounce the good things of this life for the sake of eternal values, but is confident that by such sacrifice deliberately undergone—even to the bearing of the most agonising pain—wrong can be righted and truth established.

This attitude of mind may be illustrated from numerous legends which sprang up around the personality of Gautama. There is the legend, for

example, of his sacrificing himself in a previous existence in order to save the lives of a starving tigress and her cubs. More significant is the legend of the monk Purna, who wished to settle in a land whose inhabitants were noted for their violence. Buddha asked him, "If they abuse or injure thee, what then wilt thou think?"

"I shall then think: 'These people are really good in that they only abuse me, but do not beat me and throw stones at me.' "

"But if they beat thee and throw stones at thee?"

"Then I shall think: 'They are really good in that they only beat me and throw stones at me, but do not attack me with sticks and swords.' "

"But if they attack thee with sticks and swords?"

"Then I shall think: 'They are really good in that they do not rob me of life outright.' "

"But if they rob thee of life?"

"Then I shall think: 'These people are really good to me in that they have freed me from the burden of this life.' "

Whereupon the Buddha said: "Well hast thou spoken, Purna, Go and deliver, thou self-deliverer! Lead to the other shore, thou that thyself hast reached that shore! Comfort, thou that already art comforted! Guide to Nirvāna, thou that art already entered into Nirvāna."¹

A similar legend records that King Brahmadata,

¹ Quoted from *Majjhima*, 145, in Dahlke, *Buddhist Essays*, p. 146.

having conquered, driven into exile and finally hunted to death King Dirgheti and his queen, lived in constant terror of the anticipated vengeance of their son, Prince Dirghayu, who had escaped. In the course of events the prince came into the employ of the murderer of his parents, and was chosen to serve him as personal attendant. One day, while on the hunt, the tired king fell asleep with his head in the lap of the prince. The latter drew his sword to avenge his parents, when the parting words of his murdered father rang in his ears: 'Not by hatred is hatred appeased. Hatred is appeased only by not-hatred.' The prince stayed his hand and sheathed his sword; but when the king awoke he again brandished his sword over the latter's prostrate form, at the same time disclosing his own identity. As the king begged piteously for his life, Dirghayu said without bitterness or ill-will, "How can I grant you life, O king, since my life is endangered by you? It is you, O king, who must grant me my life." Then the king said: "Well, my dear Dirghayu, then grant me my life, and I will grant you your life." When they had sworn cessation of hostility, the king asked for the interpretation of King Dirgheti's dying injunction. Whereupon the prince explained the same as follows: "When he said, 'Not by hatred is hatred appeased; hatred is appeased by not-hatred,' he meant this: You have killed my father and mother, O king. If I should deprive you of life, then

your partisans would deprive me of life; my partisans again would deprive those of life. Thus by hatred, hatred would not be appeased. But now, O king, you have granted me my life, and I have granted you your life, thus by not-hatred has hatred been appeased!" And so, the Blessed One declares, 'This is an eternal law.'"¹

Buddha himself gave this teaching:

"Not by hate is hate destroyed: by love alone hate is destroyed."

"Kindly thought is the best kind of retaliation."

"Ye monks, if robbers and murderers should sever your joints and limbs with a saw, he who fell into anger thereat would not be fulfilling my commands."

He saw, that is, deep into the new world-order, where wrong is righted in the only possible way—by the substitution of good-will for evil-will, a substitution brought about by freely-incurred suffering and self-sacrifice.

Another characteristic Buddhist legend runs as follows:

A king's son, Kunala, had both his eyes put out through the malice of his stepmother. When, with collected mind, after the first eye had been torn out, he had it put in his hand by the executioner, as he held it and looked at it with his remaining eye,

¹ Quoted in Carus, *The Gospel of Buddha*. More material may be found in Mrs. Rhys David's *Psalms of the Sisters* and *Psalms of the Brothers*.

suddenly there arose in him the comprehension of the transiency of all that has arisen. True knowledge awoke in him, and throwing off every feeling of *I*, he broke out into the exulting words: "May she long enjoy life, power and happiness who has made use of this means in order to make me a participator in this great boon."¹

In the *Majjhima* the following words of the Buddha are recorded: "If you are attacked with fists, with stones, with sticks, with swords, you must still repress all resentment and preserve a loving mind with no secret spite. Your good will should be as inexhaustible as the waters of the Ganges."

And again: "For all alike your love should be one and the same in its nature, and should include all realms, all beings and all ages. . . . Make no difference between those who are friendly, indifferent or hostile to you." "If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love: the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me."

Throughout the centuries since the time of the Buddha there have been innumerable instances of fearless Defence of Truth (*Satyagraha*) by the patient suffering of the worst which wrong can do. To-day Mahatma Gandhi has proved that such *Satyagraha* can become a political weapon of almost irresistible quality.

¹ Quoted in Dahlke, *Buddhist Essays*.

At the basis of *Satyagraha* there are five very simple ideas.

In the first place there is the conviction of wrong. Mahatma Gandhi, for example, is convinced that India is suffering grievous wrong at the hands of a foreign government. He may be completely mistaken in reaching this conclusion; but this does not affect the fact that he has reached it, and that many millions of his fellow-countrymen have also reached it. They look upon the poverty of India, which they consider to be rapidly increasing, as the main proof of this mis-government. They point to the appalling facts of indebtedness (it is common for money to be lent at the rate of two annas in the rupee compound interest per month, which means that a loan of Rs. 60., if none is repaid, becomes in five years a debt of Rs. 60,000). They quote such a judgment as the following: "I do not hesitate to say that half the agricultural population of India never know from year's end to year's end what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied" (Sir Charles Elliott); or this: "As to clothes the women and children are much worse off than the men. It is unusual to find a village woman who has any wraps at all. Most of them have to pass the night as best they can in their day-clothes—a cotton petticoat, wrapper and bodice. As a rule they and their children sleep, in the cold weather, during the warm afternoons and early hours of the night, and from midnight to dawn

cower over a fire of rubbish in the yard of the dwelling-house" (William Crooke); or this: "People in India are living on one meal every two or three days; the poorer classes are always prepared for this. As one of our Christians said, 'If we can eat food once in two days, we will not ask for more'" (Rev. G. H. Macfarlane). They remember that the most optimistic estimate given to the Simon Commission regarding the average income in India placed the figure at £8 per annum, and the least optimistic at £5 11s., whilst the corresponding figure for Great Britain is £95.¹

In view of this dire poverty of the peasantry the expenditure on the Army in India, which has quadrupled in sixty years, seems to Mahatma Gandhi, and to those who think like him, to be not merely excessive but a great wrong: so also does the expenditure on the Viceroy, with regard to which the Nationalists reckon that, counting in tour expenses, allowances and other similar items, the Viceroy costs India more than £100,000 per annum. With this is contrasted the cost of the United States President at £15,000, that of the French President at £4,000, that of the British Prime Minister at £5,000, and that of Stalin and

¹ The present writer has visited thousands of Indian homes, where the only household possessions were a few brass cooking vessels, a string-cot and a few rags. Such people, if asked where is their bedding, will point to a pile of sticks and say, "That is our bedding," meaning that on cold nights they cower over a wood-fire.

Tchicherin, who receive about £220 each, with use of a car!

The sense of serious injury, amounting to outrage, is increased by the injudicious utterances of British political leaders, for example this: "India should be maintained as a permanent possession to find fresh markets for our goods, and also employment for those superfluous articles of the present day, our boys"; or this: "We did not conquer India for the good of the Indians—that is cant. We conquered India by the sword, and by the sword we shall hold it. I am not such a hypocrite as to say that we hold India for the benefit of the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general and for Lancashire cotton goods in particular."

The nationalists contrast with such modern utterances the opinion of the great men of a century ago, who are believed to have stood for a policy of friendliness and trust, which has been reversed by their successors. For example, Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, said in 1824: "Liberal treatment has always been found the most effectual way of elevating the character of any people, and we may be sure that it will produce a similar effect on that of the people of India." Similarly, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay from 1819 to 1827, who was subsequently twice offered the Governor-Generalship of India, made the following pronouncement: "We must not dream of perpetual

possession of India, but must apply ourselves to bring the natives into a state that will admit of their governing themselves . . . and to take the glory of the achievement, and the sense of having done our duty, for the chief reward of our exertions." Even after the Mutiny, in 1861, Herbert Edwardes said this: "England, taught by both past and present, should set before her the noble policy of first fitting India for freedom and then setting her free." The Indian National Congress itself, which has been for many years the focus of the national movement, was started by Sir A. O. Hume, a retired British official, with the encouragement of the then Viceroy, Lord Dufferin.

One important section of the national movement lays emphasis on another wrong which England is believed to have inflicted upon India, viz. the introduction of Western industrialism. In Bombay, the chief industrial city in the country, there is one ward with an average of five hundred people to the acre, the average for London being fifty. It is common to find fifteen to twenty people inhabiting one room, under conditions which baffle description. The average rent demanded for such appallingly inadequate accommodation is often from 25 per cent. to 33 per cent. of a monthly wage which, considering the cost of living, is miserably low. 97 per cent. of the industrial workers of Bombay live in single-room tenements, or less. A recent

investigation disclosed the fact that there were 135 cases in which six families or more were living in a single room: and that infantile mortality for families living in one room, or less, was 828 per thousand, that for families living in two rooms 322, that for families living in three rooms 191, and that for families living in 4 rooms 133.

Such conditions seem almost inevitably to follow the progress of industrialisation in the Orient; and many of the Indian nationalists feel that they constitute one of the most serious aspects of the wrong done to their country by the West, and by England in particular. An Indian thinker who is well acquainted with the better side of Western life, and is notably moderate in his views, has declared: "There are men in the East who spend sleepless nights in cursing God because He has allowed these 'civilisers' to enter their lands." A generation or more ago Sir Dadabhoi Naoroji, who was for a time a British Member of Parliament, and was in many ways a staunch friend of England and the English, said this: "British rule has given the Indian people security of life and property: but of what value to them is a life which means death by starvation or disease?"

Evidence for this widely-spread conviction that British rule in India has been anything but an unmixed blessing might be gathered from many other sources. Rightly or wrongly, the opinion is

held and is held passionately. It is impossible to talk for long on confidential terms with any educated Indian without discovering that he is convinced that he is misgoverned. He may be a fool, or a knave, for thinking this, but he certainly does think it. His convictions in this respect may be summed up in Mr. Gandhi's own words, "The millions who approved of the Independence Declaration of January 26, 1930, did so in the faith that the rule which has piled iniquity on iniquity must be destroyed by the sheer weight of it."

This then is the first leading idea of *Satyagraha*. There has been wrong and injustice: and England is responsible for that wrong and injustice.

The second leading idea of *Satyagraha* is the idea that, at all costs, even at the cost of life itself, wrong must be faced and put right. Mr. Gandhi is never tired of telling his followers that if they acquiesce in, or fail to protest against, the exploitation and pauperisation of their country, which is going forward, as he believes, at the hands of England, then they are cowards, and unworthy of ever gaining their freedom. Truth is of sovereign worth; and to Mr. Gandhi truth includes, and involves, the establishment of right relationships between man and man, community and community, nation and nation. His followers must be willing to lay down their lives in defence of Truth, so

understood, in the conviction that it is God's will that wrong should be righted, freedom established and Truth vindicated. Such self-sacrifice only comes from the assurance that they are carrying forward God's will, and that God is on their side. Mr. Gandhi expresses his convictions on this point as follows: "The fact is that *Satyagraha* presupposes the living presence and guidance of God. The leader depends not on his own strength, but on that of God. He acts as the Voice Within guides him. Very often therefore what are practical politics so-called are unrealities to him, though in the end his prove to be the most practical politics."

And again: "We must love our English administrators and pray to God that they may have wisdom to see what appears to us to be their error. I believe in the power of suffering to melt the stoniest heart. We must by our conduct demonstrate to every Englishman that he is as safe in the remotest corner of India as he proposes to feel behind his machine-gun. Either we believe in God and His righteousness or we do not. No power on earth can stop the march of a peaceful, determined and godly people."

Thus also on the morrow of his appointment, by the Indian National Congress in April, 1931, as sole plenipotentiary for the forthcoming deliberations with Great Britain, Mr. Gandhi declared, "I have to seek God's infallible guidance and 'be careful for nothing.' "

But the facing and righting of wrong does not imply the doing of any violence to the wrong-doer. It is aimed, not at the extermination of the oppressor, but at the changing of his heart. For this reason the individual Englishmen in India, who has shown in a practical manner his friendliness towards Indians, is continually astonished by the courtesy and kindliness of Indians, even of ardently nationalistic Indians, towards himself. The present writer knows this by personal experience gained from years of work as one of two or three Europeans engaged in educational activities in the heart of a large Indian city. All around us the people as a whole, and our students most of all, were seething with political passions, fired with a burning indignation against the British system. This indignation frequently (for example in College debating societies) found vent in an almost unmeasured denunciation of all things British. Occasionally one of us Britishers would say half-humorously, after such an explosion, that we scarcely dared to show our faces or to make our voices heard. Immediately there would come an eager response from the students, "Oh, Sir, we did not mean *you*. We meant the British Government."

An Englishman who spent some months in very close touch with Mr. Gandhi during the eventful period in 1929 and 1930, when the Civil Disobedience campaign was in preparation, wrote home again and again saying that he met everywhere with

the greatest kindness and courtesy. Another Englishman who was in Bombay at the same time wrote to an English periodical as follows: "There is absolutely no antagonism to the English as such. My treatment by Indians of all schools here—even in a hotbed of Gandhism—is perfect."

Satyagraha implies, if it is rightly understood and practised, a recognition of the fact that wrong can only be righted by a change of ideals in the oppressor, which shall make him unwilling to practise oppression any more, and lead him to do justice instead of wrong. Such a change, it is believed, may best be brought about by suffering unresistingly and vicariously undergone, instead of by violent retaliation and resistance.

This brings us to the third of the main ideas underlying *Satyagraha*. Violence is no remedy. Even if it is successful in checking wrong and injustice outwardly, it is bound inevitably to lead to worse wrong in other directions. The *Satyagrahi* notices how in the West nations which have become free, as a result of the Great War, or of previous wars, have hastened to impose their rule upon others. He can point to the behaviour of the liberated Poles towards the Ukraine: to that of the liberated Italians towards the Tyrolese: to the imperialism of revolutionary France: to that of Hungarians towards Rumanians, and later of Rumanians towards Hungarians. He can

point to the fact that modern nationalism, which to a thinker such as Mazzini appeared so fair and pure a thing, has been proved by the Great War the greatest of curses to humanity, through its endeavouring to obtain its ends of liberty and constitutionalism by force. To Mahatma Gandhi himself the issue appears perfectly plain and simple. Again and again he has shown himself willing to sacrifice everything to this principle of Non-Violence, or *Ahimsa*, Harmlessness, as he prefers to call it. In 1919 he checked the movement against the Rowlatt Acts, when it was in full swing, because violence had been committed; and later he reproached himself bitterly for his 'Himalayan blunder' in trusting the masses with such a weapon as *Satyagraha* before they were rightly trained in its use. In 1922, when the Non-Co-operation movement was in the full tide of popular success, he called off the proposed inauguration of Civil Disobedience (non-payment of taxes) because violence had broken out. He declared with the utmost emphasis, on very numerous occasions, that violence would ruin the Civil Disobedience campaign of 1930. One of the most remarkable features of that campaign was the fact that, in the main, and in spite of lapses in a few localities, it maintained its non-violent character. At its outset Mr. Gandhi laid down the following rules for his Civil Resisters. They were published in his paper *Young India* on February 27, 1930:

- (1) Harbour no anger.
- (2) Suffer the anger of your opponent.
- (3) Put up with assaults: never retaliate: but do not submit, out of fear of punishment, to any order given in anger.
- (4) Submit to arrest: do not resist the confiscation of your property.
- (5) Even if you lose your life, do not retaliate.
- (6) Never swear or curse.
- (7) Never insult your opponent.
- (8) Protect officials (i.e. the agents of the British system against which the whole campaign was directed), even at the cost of your life.
- (9) In no way regard yourselves as superior to others.
- (10) Entrust your dependents to the care of God.
- (11) Never take sides in a communal quarrel.
- (12) Avoid every occasion that may give rise to a communal quarrel.

An examination of these rules will show plainly the influence of the Sermon on the Mount upon Mr. Gandhi's mind as he framed them. He sums up his teaching on Non-Violence, however, under the Hindu religious term *Ahimsa*, which is generally (though inadequately) translated Harmlessness, and which has been a cardinal principle of Hindu relationships, especially in connection with the animal creation, for many hundreds of years.

Regarding this principle of Harmlessness, Mr. Gandhi has written as follows:

“Literally speaking *Ahimsa* means non-killing, but to me it has a world of meaning, and takes me

into realms much higher, infinitely higher. It really means that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought. . . . If we resent a friend's action, or the so-called enemy's action, we still fall short of this doctrine. But when I say we should not resent, I do not say that we should acquiesce. . . . If you express your love—*Ahimsa*—in such a manner that it impresses itself indelibly upon your so-called enemy, he must return that love. . . . Under this plan of life there is no conception of patriotism which justifies such wars as you witness in Europe to-day.”

The penultimate sentence of this quotation makes clear the principle already mentioned as underlying the whole conception of genuine *Satyagraha*—the principle that no method of activity can be regarded as satisfactory which does not result in a change of heart in the oppressor. Force can never achieve such a ‘transvaluation of values.’ The revolution which is required is a spiritual revolution. Violent resistance merely hardens the spirit of ill-will and oppression, reinforcing it by all the impulses of pugnacity which are aroused through such opposition. A method is needed which will make the wrongdoer no longer desire to do wrong. It must be a method which will effect an inward change of attitude, so that a spirit of generosity and good will shall take the place of the spirit of dominance and exploitation. Hence Mr. Gandhi says, “Those who

seek to destroy men rather than their manners, adopt the latter and become worse than those whom they destroy, under the mistaken belief that the manners will die with the men. *They do not know the root of the evil.* . . . Non-violence is not mere restraint from physical violence. Evil thoughts, rashness, ill-will, hatred and falsehood are all forms of violence. To possess what others need is also violence. . . . Non-violence is the means, and truth the aim. . . . Cultivate the quiet courage of dying without killing. . . . Non-violence does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant."

These quotations show how far-reaching is the principle thus invoked. It involves nothing less than a spiritual revolution, which starting in the soul of the *Satyagrahi* must pass out from him to all with whom he comes in contact, whether they are oppressors or oppressed, everywhere kindling a new spirit, and kindling it by one means alone, the regenerative power of self-chosen suffering.

This brings us to the fourth main idea behind *Satyagraha*. The first was that there is wrong: the second, that at all costs the wrong must be righted: the third, that violence is no remedy: the fourth is the leading positive principle of *Satyagraha*, the principle that wrong can be righted, and infallibly

righted, by suffering, if that suffering is self-chosen and vicariously endured.

His study of the New Testament, reinforced by the teachings of the Gita, of Ruskin and of Tolstoy, had led Mr. Gandhi to the conclusion, enunciated by Plato in the *Gorgias* twenty-three centuries ago, that "To do is worse than to suffer injustice. . . . He who is unjustly put to death is not so much to be pitied as he who kills him, for doing injustice is the greatest of evils. . . . To be struck wrongfully is not the worst evil that can befall a man, nor to have his purse or his body cut open, but to smite and slay wrongfully is far more disgraceful and more evil."¹ But Mr. Gandhi's studies had led him farther than this. They had shown him an infallible solution for the problem of evil, viz. a willingness to court and to bear suffering at the hands of evil. In suffering so invited and borne he discerned a strange effectiveness for the destroying of the evil will.

Christ might have avoided the Cross. He need not have 'set his face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem.' He might have remained judiciously in Galilee till danger to himself was past. The vision of the Twelve Legions of Angels, seen by Him in the Garden just before His arrest, shows that even then He was conscious of supernatural resources at His command, which he might have used to establish

¹ Compare Plato, *Republic*, II: "The just man will be scourged, tormented, fettered, have his eyes put out: and lastly, having suffered all manner of evils, will be crucified."

a kingdom of righteousness, and so to save his country from the destruction of A.D. 70, and (incidentally) Himself from the Cross. But Christ did not dodge the Cross. He went through with the shame and agony of it, bearing patiently the worst that hatred and tyranny could do to him.

Satyagraha cannot be understood unless this idealism of the Cross, which lies behind it, is also understood. The Cross means suffering willingly and vicariously encountered. The fact that *Satyagraha* has been used, and used with such amazing success by a Hindu against 'Christians' and by an Indian against Englishmen, must not blind our eyes to this other fact—that in inspiration and largely also in practice the movement has been a Christian thing, a reviving and reinterpreting of the Cross.

When Mr. Gandhi initiated the Civil Disobedience campaign of 1930, which was destined to have such a decisive influence upon the relations between India and England, he declared to his fellow countrymen in effect, "You can win freedom and right, and win them swiftly, if only you are prepared to suffer enough for them, and to suffer without retaliation. You must diligently seek out lines of suffering. You must challenge the imperial authority in every way which does not involve violence or moral turpitude." The campaign accordingly began with an attempt, led by Mr. Gandhi himself, to break the Government salt-monopoly; and it continued with a chal-

lenge to the Government drink-monopoly, and with a diligently-prosecuted endeavour to prevent the sale of foreign cloth, which sale was regarded as a main objective of the Government's economic policy. In numerous other ways also, some of them closely bordering on the morally indefensible, the authority of the British Raj was effectively challenged. Wherever possible the peasants were incited to refuse payment of the land-tax.

The propaganda designed to bring about these ends was carried on both by a host of nationalist speakers and organisers, and by large (in some cases exceedingly large) crowds of *Satyagrahis*, who sought by every means in their power to persuade the police, as the agents of Government, to use violence upon them, in order that they might attain their object of suffering without resistance the worst that the 'oppressor' might do to them. The police were placed in an exceedingly difficult position. If they resorted to ordinary police-action, they were merely playing into the hands of the nationalists, and (as experience rapidly began to show) were adding fuel to the fire of nationalist ardour. It was impossible, on the other hand, to stand by and see the law broken.

Therefore the authorities adopted the policy of using the minimum of force consistent with the 'safeguarding of law and order.' But this policy was very difficult to apply. In the first place the minimum of force was still too much, in view of a situation in

which every police-charge, ordered under whatever provocation and however cautiously carried out, was still a priceless boon to the movement of *Satyagraha*, which could only flourish by such 'suffering.' In the second place, the rank and file of the police had many a long-standing grudge against the nationalists, and were somewhat naturally ready to supply the 'suffering' which was demanded. For a generation the nationalists all over India have opposed the police in every possible way, voting against appropriations in the provincial budgets which would have given them better pay and better living conditions, and making their life a burden to them on all occasions of political excitement. Moreover, the nationalist leaders are for the most part caste Hindus: and the police are largely recruited from the Moslem and low-caste communities, which have accounts to settle with the caste Hindus dating back for many centuries. When the fact is taken into consideration that the police had to stand up to an odious and exasperating form of baiting, for hour after hour and day after day, in the gruelling heat of an Indian hot-weather, at the hands of mobs begging, beseeching and inciting them to use their *lathis* (staves) upon them, it is not to be wondered at that occasionally the demand was complied with: and that the clamour for 'suffering' was successful in gaining what it wanted.

The country thus became full of rumours of

'police atrocities,' the great majority of which were nothing but rumours. Here and there, however, there was definite ground for the complaints. Every such instance of rigour was a goldmine to the national cause, and was exploited as such.

It was a situation unique and extraordinary, not devoid of comic elements, and yet full of the matter of high tragedy.

As a well-qualified observer wrote at the time, "When people have watched non-resisting *Satyagrahis* standing up with folded arms and being laid out on the ground by police *lathis*, they are never the same people again, and they *feel* that in the quarrel Government and the police were wrong." The element of feeling proved to be of more and more decisive importance as the months of 1930 went by. A great historian has declared that 'a nation is a nation when it *feels* itself to be one': and the effect of *Satyagraha* was to kindle the sentiment of nationality at great speed and with profound effectiveness all over India. Thus the movement became a method by which the police and the Government behind the police were driven, unwillingly and against their own better judgment, to contribute to their own downfall. Finally they could hardly move without destroying themselves!

The self-chosen suffering for which *Satyagraha* called, and which was its method and policy, was not confined to any one class. "When knighted

members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, aged Vice-Chancellors of Indian Universities, retired Judges of High Courts, and trusted and respected leaders of Indian thought and life of every shade of opinion, are in jail in opposition to our country's policy, it causes one to think furiously. If we cannot rule India without keeping in jail hundreds of India's most respected citizens, what about it?" These words, from an Englishman long resident in India, will serve to show the immense appeal which *Satyagraha* made even to classes which in any other country would have formed the bulwarks of conservative caution, and would have shown themselves the rigorous defenders of vested interests and established institutions. In other words, the use of *Satyagraha* brought in, as stalwart protagonists of the national cause, elements of the population which would immediately have been estranged by any appeal to violence.

Satyagraha brought in also the women, whose unselfish work became of greater and greater importance as the campaign went forward, especially in connection with the movement for the boycott of British goods. In December 1930 it was officially announced in the British House of Commons that the exports from England to India had decreased, as between the third quarter of 1929 and the third quarter of 1930, by 43·5 per cent.¹ The main reason

¹ The falling-off in cotton goods was very much higher than this.

for this astonishing falling-off, which came at a time of acute economic depression in England, was the national work done by the Indian women volunteers. Many of them were women who had spent their lives behind the *purdah*. Many were people of wealth and refinement. Yet at the call of the national movement they came out into public, and took their place day by day as volunteer pickets before shops selling British goods. As the men were sent to jail, the women automatically stepped into positions of leadership; and before the end of 1930 the Congress party 'Dictators' in many of the Indian cities were women. Everywhere *Satyagraha* meant to Indian womanhood a priceless opportunity for emancipation; and it was an opportunity eagerly accepted, so that it has been well said that Mr. Gandhi, by his movement for political freedom, has given the signal for social emancipation also.

Another notable feature of *Satyagraha* was the holding of immense public demonstrations. At one of these, in Bombay, it is reckoned that one in every three of the adult male population of the city were present, prepared to suffer whatever might come as the result of their defiance of police orders. In the ranks of these demonstrations were numbers of the city's best citizens, legislators, educationalists and professional men of all types. It is impossible not to compare such gatherings with those which took place in England during the crisis of the Reform

Bill agitation in 1832. For example, in May of that year a monster meeting was held on Newhall Hill, Birmingham, which was attended by two hundred thousand people, who 'solemnly and with uplifted hands took the view never to cease from agitation till the Reform Bill were passed, saying 'with unbroken faith, through every peril and privation, we here devote ourselves to our country's cause.' The effect of the holding of such meetings in many parts of England was decisive. The will of the people, thus unmistakably shown, was acted upon speedily; and the Bill was passed.

In India *Satyagraha* meant not only gigantic public meetings and processions: and not only unarmed crowds standing up unflinchingly to police beatings, with very numerous casualties in consequence: but also the imprisonment of huge numbers of nationalists. At one time there were more than fifty thousand *Satyagrahis* in jail; and the correspondent of an English newspaper in Bombay reported, in June 1930, that 'Indians here have got to the state of delighting to go to prison for their convictions.' Arrest was eagerly anticipated and welcomed as a high honour. In many country districts the peasants became infected with the same spirit, to the extent of being willing to see their goods distrained rather than pay their land-tax.

Thus by degrees the spirit of eagerness to suffer spread through India, creating a situation in which

it became impossible for the alien government to continue to function. Almost without bloodshed an immensely significant revolution was brought about—a revolution which meant the successful challenging of the greatest imperial power in the world's history,¹ an imperial power buttressed by a scientifically-organised system of administration, by a highly efficient and public-spirited body of officials, and by an army recently victorious in the greatest of all wars. That imperial power was assailed and (however little we may like to admit it) worsted by a miscellaneous collection of clerks, peasants and women, untrained to concerted action and extremely sketchily organised. Their success was due to their readiness to suffer *anything* for the sake of what they believed to be right, in defence of the poor and weak.

After the struggle was over Mr. Gandhi wrote concerning it as follows:

“We cannot win Swaraj for our famishing millions by the way of the sword. . . . The way of violence can only lead to perdition. Do you think that all the women and children who covered themselves with glory during the last campaign would have done so if we had pursued the path of violence? Would women like Gangabehn, who stood the *lathi* blows till her white *sari* was drenched with blood, have

¹ The Roman Empire, at its maximum, probably never contained more than one-fifth of the population of the modern British Empire.

done the unique service they did if we had violence in us? We were able to enlist as soldiers millions of men, women and children because we were pledged to non-violence. Anger cannot take us forward. We need not consider the Englishman as our enemies. I have used *Satyagraha* against them, but have never thought of them as enemies. *I want to convert them, and the only way is the way of love.*"¹

Mr. Gandhi was convinced, throughout the struggle, that if only the principle of Non-Violence could be maintained, success was absolutely certain. "Nothing can stand before the march of a peaceful, orderly and God-fearing people." He even declared on certain occasions, in a somewhat apocalyptic manner, that if only a very few *Satyagrahis* genuinely believed in and practised *Satyagraha* with their whole hearts, victory for their cause was inevitable. In other words, he was possessed by an unconquerable faith in the power of self-chosen, non-retaliating suffering to right wrong and to establish truth. He believed with his whole soul in the principle of the Cross.

Some day perhaps the so-called Christians of the West will learn anew from this Hindu the meaning

¹ From an article in *Young India*, April 2, 1931. In other writings of about the same time Mr. Gandhi speaks very plainly about the failure to restrain the spirit of violence, which he had noticed in some phases of the 1930-31 struggle. He spoke in a similar strain after the Bombay riots of 1921, which were indirectly due to the Non-Co-operation campaign. At that time he severely blamed himself for the 'Himalayan blunder' of supposing that the masses could be rapidly trained in the idealism of non-violent *Satyagraha*.

and the power of the primary fact of their Faith: and will learn it, not as a dogma, but as a practical working principle, eminently capable of solving modern problems in the modern world. Then there will arise a band of Cross-bearers and Cross-lovers who will be as sincere as the Indian *Satyagrahis* have been in their opposition to wrong, and who will therefore be able to deal directly and victoriously with those gigantic problems, especially the problems of international ill-will, hatred and warfare, which at present baffle the skill of the best leaders whom the West can produce.

The gist of the whole matter is sincerity and courage in opposition to wrong and in assertion of truth. The name *Satyagraha*—moral determination in the defence of Truth—has been well chosen. Without this intense ethical sincerity there will be timidity and dodging in face of the suffering which is the only means of establishing Truth, the only method of bearing the Cross. Given such sincerity, all things are possible.

CHAPTER SIX

THE GENESIS OF *SATYAGRAHA*

It is important to realise that *Satyagraha* is essentially a corporate enterprise, to be undertaken by a group of people united not only in purpose and idealism, but by the practice of a common life and the sharing of a common discipline.

It was during his twenty years' residence in South Africa that Mr. Gandhi made his first experiments in *Satyagraha*. He thus gained invaluable experience, which he later put to use in the far larger movements of *Satyagraha* in India. The laboratories at which these experiments were developed were his two community-settlements, or *Ashramas*, in which his ideas took form and became powerful. The first of these was near Johannesburg, and the second near Durban. Their significance as laboratories for the perfecting of a technique, and later as power-houses in the stress of actual passive resistance, may be studied in Mr. Gandhi's own book, *Satyagraha in South Africa*. Shortly after his return to India, in 1915, he set to work to build up a similar community-settlement, near Ahmedabad in Gujerat, which might act as laboratory and power-house for possible Indian movements of a similar character to those which had proved so successful in South Africa.

From that time on the *Satyagraha Ashrama* at Sabarmati, Ahmedabad, has been increasingly important in the development of Indian nationalism. It has provided Mr. Gandhi himself with the personal backing of a group of loyal and enthusiastic friends, who are ready and eager to follow him to any self-sacrifice on behalf of the ends which they and he hold in common. It has given him the spiritual support, founded on a joint practice of religion, which he regards as a most important factor in any movement of *Satyagraha* that is to be genuinely successful. It has provided also a congenial and favourable environment in which the ideals of the movement and their application in many spheres may be thoroughly thought out and tested.

The life of the *Ashrama* is conducted on a basis of spartan simplicity. Every one of its inmates must take his share in the 'menial' work of the community: and all barriers of caste are effectively broken by the fact that this menial work includes the duty of the scavenger. Many hours a day are devoted to manual labour, chiefly in the form of hand-spinning; and this labour is regarded as a sacramental agency, by which the *Satyagrahis* are united to the toiling and suffering millions of their poverty-stricken fellow-countrymen. The community life is organised on a basis of rigorous discipline, even of asceticism, and with a spiritual motive

running through it, so that the *Satyagrahis* one and all feel that they are engaged on a profoundly significant and important task, the gathering of the spiritual power which shall make the idealism of their movement practically effective as a revolutionary force.

The *Ashrama* forms a microcosm of the new India—a land where, in accordance with the ancient teaching of the *Gita*, selfish desire and personal ambition shall be banished, a land of hard work organised for the sake of the community rather than of individuals, a land where wants are rigorously kept down and spiritual values are set in the forefront, a land where barriers of creed, race and caste are transcended by the spirit of service. Some day, it is believed, the whole of India shall be a federation of such communities, inspired by this same spirit, and carrying the idea of *Satyagraha* into all the relations of life.

It was in communities of this type that Mr. Gandhi developed his technique of *Satyagraha* during the years which he spent in South Africa. From such communities went forth the band of leaders who carried through to success the remarkable movement of 1913, by which the self-chosen suffering of some two thousand Indians, chiefly labourers, protesting against invidious and oppressive legislation was eventually effective in bringing about the repeal of that legislation. In the course

of that struggle, the main feature of which was a 'trek' from Natal into the Transvaal, Mr. Gandhi himself was responsible for the commissariat of the *Satyagrahis*, and found it needful to do much of the cooking for them with his own hands and this after many hours each day of hard marching. Even in 1930, when he was over sixty years of age, on the occasion of the conclusion of the settlement with Lord Irwin, the Mahatma refused to be taken back to Old Delhi by car, though it was nearly midnight, but insisted on walking the seven miles on foot: and this although his diet consists of goat's milk and almond paste.

The spirit in which the initial movement of *Satyagraha* was launched may be gauged from the following principles laid down by its leader:

Truth is ever with the minority; for truth itself is corrupted in the hands of a majority.

Movements do not fail for lack of funds, but because they have too much.

All institutions run on the interest of accumulated capital cease to be amenable to public opinion and become autocratic and self-righteous.

A *Satyagraha* bids good-bye to fear; he is therefore never afraid of trusting his opponent, even if that opponent has twenty times deceived him.

The Fruit of *Satyagraha* is contained in the movement itself (i.e. quite irrespective of its success or failure).

Rejoice at the thought of approaching death as at the prospect of meeting a long-lost friend.

In *Satyagraha* there are no leaders and no followers: all are leaders and all are followers.

You must count the cost of *Satyagraha* before entering upon it: and be prepared for any sacrifice.

A *Satyagrahi* must be entirely single-minded.

Satyagraha must have a limited objective, and rigorously concentrate its attention upon it.

A *Satyagrahi* must take a man at his own valuation, even at the almost certain risk of being deceived.

A subscription of five rupees to the movement is more than one of twenty-five rupees if it is all that the giver can afford.

A movement of *Satyagraha* can be carried on without material resources.

The *Satyagraha* struggle itself is victory in itself.

A *Satyagrahi's* peacefulness and self-restraint constitute his preparation for war: he relies upon God as his sole refuge.

The courteous behaviour of *Satyagrahis* calls forth courtesy in return from the officials whom they are compelled to oppose.

The world rests upon the bedrock of Truth: *Satyagraha* must pierce down to that foundation.

If anyone wants peace, he must seek it within himself.

How can you kill the *Satyagrahi*, who is voluntarily dead?

Victory is implicit in our two qualities of non-violence and determination.

Distrust is a sign of weakness, and *Satyagraha* implies the banishment of all weakness and therefore of distrust, which is clearly out of place when the adversary is not to be destroyed but won over.

These extracts, which are for the most part given in Mr. Gandhi's own words,¹ will serve to outline the idealism of his movement in its initial stages. That idealism has remained essentially the same in all subsequent developments of method and technique. A brief study of the principles here laid down will show how deeply the conceptions behind *Satyagraha* are permeated by the spirit and ideals of the Sermon on the Mount.

The general spirit of South African *Satyagraha* may be seen from Mr. Gandhi's expression of belief, after the struggle had proved successful, that 'a continuance of the generous spirit which the Government have applied to the treatment of the problem during the past few months will make it quite certain that the Indian community will never be a source of trouble to the Government.'

South African *Satyagraha* had repercussions far beyond the limits of South Africa itself. The news of the various demonstrations of Indian opinion, following by the 'trek,' by the imprisonment of hundreds of *Satyagrahis* and by other sufferings, caused immense excitement in India. Great public meetings were held all over the country, addressed by the foremost leaders of Indian public opinion. The writer of these words will never forget the impression produced upon him at one of these

¹ In his *Satyagraha in South Africa*.

meetings, held in Delhi and addressed by the greatest statesman of modern India, Mr. G. H. Gokhale. As the result of the movement which found expression in this meeting, one of the best-known European missionaries in Delhi gave the whole of his life's savings to help the Indian cause in South Africa. A little later the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, placed himself at the head of Indian opinion by a remarkable speech at Madras, in which he demanded a Commission of Inquiry. The result was the hurried intervention of the Imperial Authorities, the discharge from prison of the Indian leaders and the acceptance in the main of their point of view. Then came the mission of reconciliation undertaken in South Africa by Messrs. C. F. Andrews and W. W. Pearson. A European strike hampered the Union Government just when the Indian situation was most difficult; but Mr. Gandhi, as he had already done on a similar occasion, undertook not to add to the Government's embarrassments whilst the strike was in progress; and the impression created by this act of courtesy was so great that "an entirely new spirit of friendliness, trust and co-operation was found to have been created by the great Indian leader."¹

After the South African struggle had been brought to a successful conclusion, Mr. Gandhi left that country, having proved that political ends

¹ H. S. L. Polak in *Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi*.

could be achieved, and justice secured, by the sole means of non-violent *Satyagraha*. "Passive Resistance has given for these disfranchised ones far more than the vote could have won, and in a shorter time. But above and beyond all this is the new spirit of conciliation that has resulted from the hardships, the sufferings, the sacrifices of the passive resisters."¹

In the South African struggle, which was described by the London *Times* as 'one of the most remarkable manifestations in history of the spirit of Passive Resistance,' Mr. Gandhi showed a disposition to 'go the second mile' with those to whom he was politically opposed, especially in connection with the two European strikes. This spirit has not perhaps been so marked during the later big-scale campaigns of *Satyagraha* in India. Its absence may account for those failures of the masses to comprehend and live up to the idealism of non-violence which Mr. Gandhi himself has so deeply deplored. For this and other reasons the South African struggle stands out as probably the purest and most distinctive movement of Passive Resistance in recent times. Its records must be studied for themselves, in Mr. Gandhi's *Satyagraha in South Africa* or in Mr. C. F. Andrews' *Mahatma Gandhi: His Own Story*. They disclose the emergence into effective operation of a 'moral equivalent for war' whose

¹ H. S. L. Polak in *Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi*.

ultimate significance for the well-being of mankind it would be hard to exaggerate. They show Mr. Gandhi as the pioneer in an immensely-significant enterprise of discovery, whereby spiritual forces may be yoked to severely practical ends. They powerfully suggest, also, to the reader's mind the necessity for industrious preparation on the part of the idealists of the new order, if the old order of force is to be superseded. If peace is to have 'her victories no less than war,' those victories must be planned and prepared for as carefully and patiently as those of war. A merely impromptu experimenting in methods of Passive Resistance can never suffice. Mr. Gandhi's twenty years of patient spadework amongst the 'stinking coolies' (as they were called) in South Africa show the necessity of thought and work far ahead if a programme of *Satyagraha* is to be rightly carried through without degradation towards violence. The lack of such thorough preparation, and the immense numbers involved, are probably responsible for the absence of a similar purity of motive and action in the subsequent Indian movements. "No great movement of 'corporate moral resistance' can be effectively developed, organised and launched without exhaustive preparation. Merely to trust to a sudden wave of popular emotion is to court failure at the very outset. . . . When we consider, even for a moment, the vast and detailed preparations

that are made for a struggle of violence such as a war, and how military training occupies many years of a man's lifetime and with large numbers becomes a life-profession, it should be abundantly clear that the moral effect needed to supplant war cannot be made in an impromptu manner. 'Corporate moral resistance' needs all the care and forethought of an earnestness no less wholehearted than that which is given to world-wide military endeavour. In this respect Christ's words are still true: 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.'"¹

The success of the movement in South Africa convinced Mr. Gandhi that here, ready to his hand, was an instrument which might be employed, if need were to arise, on an even wider stage. Soon after his return to India, in 1915, he began to believe that there were needs in that country sufficiently pressing to render not only justifiable but necessary the use of the newly-perfected weapon in India also. Accordingly the *Satyagraha Ashrama* at Ahmedabad was organised, to become a training-ground for a band of stalwarts acquainted from within with the ideals of *Satyagraha*, and with Mr. Gandhi's methods of applying those ideals. The day might come when the *Satyagrahis* thus trained might find themselves called upon to act as the

¹ C. F. Andrews, *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*, p. 348.

leaders of the thought and practice of *Satyagraha* all over India.

In the years between 1915 and 1922 *Satyagraha* was tried out in seven campaigns,¹ ranging from small local struggles to a first-grade national movement. In the first of these campaigns, that concerned with the Viramgan customs barrier, the mere suggestion that *Satyagraha* might be used was sufficient. In the second, the important movement which led to the ending of the system of indenture, not only was the use of *Satyagraha* suggested, but preparations were made for actually starting it. As a result, a system which had in some respects prolonged the institution of slavery for eighty years was at last brought to an end. In the third, the Champaran question, *Satyagraha* was actually put into practice for a short time. In the fourth, a mill-strike at Ahmedabad, in which Mr. Gandhi had convinced himself of the justice of the labourers' claims, not only did the mill-hands practise *Satyagraha*, but Mr. Gandhi did so himself also, in order to sustain them in their determination. In the fifth, the question of the reassessment of the land-tax in the Khaira district, the practice of *Satyagraha* by the peasants was not wholly satisfactory, as 'their non-violence was only superficial.' The sixth, the campaign of 1919, was directed

¹ Details concerning these may be found in C. F. Andrews' *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*.

against the detested Rowlatt Acts. These Acts were introduced, through a blunder worse than a crime, at a moment disastrously ill-chosen, with the result that India felt herself to be rewarded for her services in the War by the establishment of methods of summary jurisdiction to combat brigandage. The first institution of mass-*Satyagraha* on this occasion led to very serious disorders in Northern India. As a result Mr. Gandhi had to confess that he had made the 'Himalayan blunder' of considering that the common people were as yet sufficiently trained in the idealism of his movement to render it safe for their leaders to entrust the weapon of *Satyagraha* to them. In the seventh campaign, the Non-Cooperation movement of 1920-22, which spread rapidly all over India, although an extraordinary degree of discipline was shown by the Indian masses as a whole, violence broke out in certain localities, with the result that Mr. Gandhi called the movement off just as it was coming to a head.

These seven campaigns were all in a sense preparatory and experimental. They were also to some extent at least unsatisfactory, inasmuch as *Satyagraha*, whenever tried on a big scale in India, had broken down through lack of discipline amongst the masses, leading to outbreaks of violence.

There followed six years of comparative political quiescence, during which *Satyagraha* was applied

on a number of occasions to the solution of social and economic problems, with the result that most valuable experience was gained, and important educational work carried through, by means of which the country became more and more thoroughly trained in the idealism of the movement.

It will be of advantage to consider briefly two or three of these non-political campaigns of *Satyagraha*.

One of the most interesting was the Vykom campaign. At this town in the State of Travancore the Untouchables, who have traditionally been denied the rights of human beings within the Hindu body-politic, but who have found in Mr. Gandhi a stalwart defender of their rights to emancipation, resolved to make a test-case of the fact that they were forbidden by the higher castes to use a certain street leading to a temple. All over South India streets alongside which are the dwelling-houses of high-caste people had from time immemorial been closed to outcastes.

It was announced that on a certain day a procession of outcastes would march down this street. The matter was referred to the State police, and the outcaste demonstrators were arrested and imprisoned. The matter became widely known, and large numbers of outcaste and other volunteers flocked to Vykom in order to march down the street in question. Arrests continued to be made until the

State jails were full. Then the authorities adopted a new policy. They drew a police cordon across the entrances to the street.

The matter was then referred by the outcastes to Mr. Gandhi. He replied that they must practise *Satyagraha* in assertion of their rights. They must be absolutely unflinching in their determination to secure justice, but without violence. This would mean that they must stand in the Indian attitude of petition, with joined hands and bowed heads, up against the police-cordon until it gave way.

Preparations were accordingly made for a protracted campaign of *Satyagraha* on these lines. Thousands of volunteers came in, from all parts of the country. A camp was established. Batches were organised; and for sixteen months the volunteers stood in the attitude of petition against the police-cordon. During the rainy season the street was flooded; and the *Satyagrahis* had to stand deep in water, the police being in boats. There was much sickness and suffering in consequence.

Finally, however, their display of patient determination was successful in gaining its object. The cordon was removed; the outcastes marched in triumphal procession down the street; the test-case had been won.

From this incident there has spread a wide movement for the emancipation of the outcastes all over India from these ancient and evil taboos.

Another more recent case occurred in a city of Northern India, where the women have for the most part been kept in a position of subjection behind the veil. Mr. Gandhi is known to be a champion of the emancipation of womanhood; and *Satyagraha* has been recognised as a weapon which women can wield successfully. The women in one of the quarters of the city in question were desirous that a certain bye-law should be passed by the municipal authorities. They petitioned, but in vain. Finally they went in a large body to the Town Hall whilst the City Council was in session, and sat down all around it, announcing that they would not stir till the bye-law in question was passed. It was passed in about three hours.¹

On at least one occasion Mr. Gandhi has used *Satyagraha* himself as a mode of settling industrial disputes. During one such dispute the claims of both sides were submitted to him. He investigated them, and gave what he believed to be a right decision. This was not at once accepted; and Mr. Gandhi, impressed by the suffering caused by the strike, announced that he would himself fast till peace should be restored. It is said that after a few

¹ What may be regarded as a type of *Satyagraha* was put into practice on various occasions by the workers for Women's Suffrage in England twenty years ago, though in this movement also violence was apt to creep in. *Satyagraha* is a weapon well adapted to the use of women, who are constitutionally more patient and brave than men in the bearing of suffering. It is a weapon which the women of the West, now in a position of political control, may some day use with decisive effect for the solving of the great problems of Western life.

days the representatives of both sides called upon him beseeching him to name any settlement which he thought right, and pledging themselves to accept and observe it.

Some years ago a great new dam was to be built across a valley in the Western Ghats above Bombay, in order to supply water for a hydro-electric scheme which would facilitate the extension of Western industry in that city. This would mean increased numbers of helpless peasants migrating from country villages to the city, and consequently increasing overcrowding, disease, infantile mortality, indebtedness, moral collapse and all the other heterogeneous evils of life in a great industrial city in the East. The scheme also meant the uprooting from their ancestral lands of many hundreds of the finest peasant stock in Western India. Generous compensation was offered; but the peasants did not wish to sell; and if they did sell the cash would soon be gone, and they would drift to the cities. It seemed to the nationalists a clear case of the sacrificing of personal values to the interests of big-scale Western industry. Accordingly it was resolved that *Satyagraha* should be offered. The peasants were organised. Large numbers of volunteers came to help them from other parts. The *Satyagrahis* lay down in batches upon the ground which was to be excavated by the engineers.

In this way the progress of the dam was held

up for some months. The case attracted much attention throughout India; and though the *Satyagraha* was not in the end successful as regards the prevention of the expropriation of the peasants, the episode served as an effective means of educating public opinion.

Perhaps the most notable case of *Satyagraha* during the years between 1922 and 1928 was Mr. Gandhi's fast of 1924. In the latter part of that year the relations between Hindus and Mohammedans were worse than at any time in the recent history of India, owing to a very grave massacre of Hindus by Mohammedans, which had taken place at Kohat on the North-West frontier. Mr. Gandhi, who had recently been released from jail, became convinced that there could be no hope of future peace and freedom for his country unless something signal were done to expel the evil spirit of hatred and violence which existed between the two communities. He believed that he was called upon to undertake something which a Christian would most aptly describe as the application of the method of the Cross to the then existing communal problem in India. He must bear in his own body, and through self-chosen suffering, the burden of his people's sin, in order that they might be freed from that sin through the creation of a new mind and spirit within them. Their evil will must give way to a good will; and the transformation could

only take place through the redemptive power of vicarious suffering.

Accordingly Mr. Gandhi caused it to be announced that he would fast until a new spirit were manifested in the relations between the Hindus and the Mohammedans.

It must be remembered, in considering this fast, that Mr. Gandhi was, and still is, not merely a national leader in the Western sense, i.e. a successful politician. He was, and is, venerated by his fellow-countrymen not so much for his political abilities, which in any case are not the outstanding feature of his character, as for his spiritual qualities—his prophetic vision of righteousness, his enunciation and practical application of the principles of *Satyagraha*, above all his sympathy with the poor and his self-identification with them. It is because of these qualities that so many of his fellow-countrymen not only admire and follow Mr. Gandhi, but even worship him as an incarnation of the Supreme Being. The very idea that this Mahatma—this great spiritual leader—was going to sacrifice himself because of their transgression, exercised a profound influence upon the minds of Indians of all classes and of both communities; for Mr. Gandhi, though a Hindu, had been at pains, especially during the Non-Co-operation movement, to show that he identified himself as far as possible with Mohammedan aspirations.

The effect of this personal and vicarious *Satyagraha* became very marked within a few days of its inception. Bulletins containing details of the Mahatma's health were published daily in the Indian Press all over the country. A change of spirit rapidly took place. Where before all had been resentment and exasperation, a determined movement came into evidence for the peaceable solving of old problems, the discovery of effective lines of compromise, the removal of long-standing grievances. The leaders of the two communities got together, and began diligently to explore avenues of conciliation. Everywhere a spirit of friendliness came into existence, in place of the spirit of hatred.

At the end of three weeks of rigorous fasting Mr. Gandhi was able to declare that the purpose with which he had undertaken the fast—the changing of the spirit of the antagonised communities—had so far been effected that he was able to discontinue his self-imposed *Satyagraha*.

This three weeks' lonely struggle, even though it was so individual, was unquestionably the most noteworthy of all the preparatory movements of *Satyagraha* which we have been considering. It showed *Satyagraha* as a spiritual instrument to be wielded for the most matter-of-fact and realistic of ends, the prevention of rapine and massacre. It showed that instrument to be capable of achieving

astonishing practical success, and in a very brief period of time. It is true that there have been numerous outbreaks of intercommunal friction and rioting in India since 1924; but the position has never again been so bad as it was in that year; and Indians have ever since realised that, if the worst comes to the worst, there is an effective way out of the difficulty, viz. *Satyagraha*—*Satyagraha* embarked upon by those who feel the need of their country sufficiently deeply to risk their lives by some such course of self-chosen suffering, in order that the need in question may be met, the evil spirit of hatred and violence cast out, and reconciliation effected.

But the fast of 1924 meant more than this. It meant the coming of the Cross down into the baffling problems of modern India, not merely as a possible solution, but as *the only* genuinely practical solution of these problems. As was inevitable, this coming of the Cross excited derision in some quarters, and violent resentment in others. *But the Cross worked*. And it worked where nothing else would work, amidst conditions of desperate need.

It is not too much to say that in those three weeks of 1924 a new type of nationalism was born into the world, a nationalism based on ethical convictions instead of violent self-assertion. This was a remarkable thing; but far more remarkable than

this was the fact that here, in our feverish and disillusioned post-war world, was a statesman using the principle of the Cross as a working method for practical politics. The Christian nation whose spokesman had said, a year or two previously, that "you cannot govern Ireland by the principles of the Sermon on the Mount," would clearly be sooner or later confronted in India by a Hindu statesman who would say, 'I propose to demonstrate, that India can be freed, and governed, by the principles of the Sermon on the Mount.'

It will be clear from this how it came about that a great Hindu reformer and publicist¹ could say of Mr. Gandhi—"Never before have so many earnest minds of all races and creeds turned to Christ for light and guidance in their perplexities. The number and insight of the new lives of Christ are alone evidence of this fresh and deepened interest in His life and teaching. But the most impressive proof of it is that Mahatma Gandhi, a Hindu, has sought for the first time in history to apply the Master's teaching to politics as the best means of raising the people of India to a consciousness of their duty to themselves and to humanity. His movement has made the central teaching of Christ known and cherished in quarters to which a hundred years of the propaganda of Christian Missions has not been able to penetrate.

¹ The editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*.

And it has presented it in a form readily assimilable to the Indian mind.”

Such a statement may appear meaningless until it is remembered that ‘the central teaching of Christ’ to which it refers is taken as being the Cross, and the Cross as an eternal principle for the conquering of wrong and the transforming of the evil will into a good will, by means of suffering, self-chosen and patiently endured.

In 1928 the period of quiet preparation came to an end. *Satyagraha* had now become a familiar weapon to the people of the whole of India. They had heard of its use as efficacious for the solutions of a large variety of problems, social, economic, religious, as well as political. They had begun to understand something of the moral prerequisites for the wielding of this weapon, the necessity for rigorous discipline, for a complete abandonment of all self-interest, above all for resolute non-violence.

During 1928 serious discontent was excited in the district of Bardoli, not far from Mr. Gandhi’s home in Ahmedabad, in consequence of a reassessment of land-revenue carried through by Government and resulting in a demand for enhanced taxation. This demand was felt by the peasants to be unjust under existing economic conditions. Eventually *Satyagraha* was offered against the Government on this issue. Taxes were refused; and a great deal of suffering resulted. In the issue

the matter was reinvestigated, and the assessment much reduced. To Nationalists all over the country the Bardoli affair came as one more proof of the extraordinary efficacy of the weapon of *Satyagraha*, given determination to suffer enough amongst those prepared to use that weapon.

Towards the end of 1929 the decision was reached that the time had now come to use this same weapon in a full-scale endeavour to gain freedom for India from alien control, with the consequences which have already been noticed.

One picture may perhaps be given of the working of *Satyagraha* in the crisis of that struggle. It is taken from a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* in December 1930:

“A member of the Society of Friends living in Bombay has given us an account of what she herself saw in September. I give extracts which speak for themselves. “On September 17th or 18th I was on a balcony of the third floor of a house near by and opposite to the Town Hall in Bombay, where an election was taking place. There was a large number of people, but quite peaceful and quiet; and those belonging to the Congress party were, in their usual well-organised and methodical way, regulating the traffic, guiding pedestrians through crowded parts and dispersing crowds where they became too dense to allow of slow driving through them. One of the men so engaged was struck with

a *lathi* by a police sepoy; he did not retaliate nor move away. The second time he was struck he fell to the ground. Again he was beaten. Two of the ambulance men in attendance fetched a stretcher to take him to the ambulance car, as he was too much hurt to walk even with their aid. After he had been lifted into the stretcher the sepoy again struck him—a man already badly wounded—as he lay there being carried to the car.

“Some weeks previously (I am sorry I forget the exact date) I was watching a small crowd from a balcony above a store in one of the chief roads of the city. They had collected there when it became known that arrests were being made of the picketers. These picketers do not interfere with the people going into the shops. . . . At intervals this crowd was broken up in a most needlessly brutal way with *lathis*. . . . Many people were severely hurt and had to be taken away in ambulance cars to the hospitals. One man—a peaceable citizen who did not belong to the Congress movement nor had anything to do with the Nationalists—was serving in his shop opposite to and a few yards away from the balcony where I was watching. As a *lathi* charge was made a few of the people nearest his shop went into it to get out of the way of the sepoys. An English sergeant entered the shop, drove the people out with his whip, and severely beat the owner of the shop on his own premises.

Hearing there were English people on the balcony opposite who were sympathisers with the ill-treated people, he came across, asked if we could explain the reason of such things being done, and showed us the mark on his back made through two thicknesses of cloth. . . . I have seen the Nationalists under the most terrible provocations, and never once have they resorted to violence or retaliation in any way, though when their wounded or their women are ill-treated it is fearfully hard for them."

Many more such descriptions might be given, from the statements of eye-witnesses, concerning the very concrete nature of the suffering which the *Satyagrahis* took upon themselves, and concerning the spirit of disciplined patience in which they bore that suffering. A well-known English observer of current affairs, giving some account of Indian *Satyagraha* on the wireless in March 1931, said this: "I was reading a book on India the other day, written by a Frenchwoman who has every reason to be fond of Great Britain; and she declared that although she had been through civil war in Ireland, Portugal and Afghanistan, to say nothing of a revolution or two, she had never seen anything so tragic or so impressive as these crowds of passive resisters, blocking the traffic by lying flat on the roads, or otherwise making the normal business of the country impossible."

An English spectator of what was actually

involved in a former movement of *Satyagraha*, when hundreds of ex-soldiers, belonging to the proudest and most martial race in India, marched in rank after rank up to a cordon of police, there to be clubbed down unresistingly, has said to the present writer that never in his life did he see anything so dreadful and at the same time so impressive. On such an occasion it is plainly perceived by an impartial observer that two world-orders are in conflict, that of force and that of the Cross, the latter suffering patiently the worst that the former can do, in order to change the spirit of the force-wielder. And it is a terrible thing when the Cross thus gets nakedly to grips with force.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CROSS AND *SATYAGRAHA*

It will be well, at this point, to remind ourselves of the primitive Christian teaching concerning the Cross as a practical principle for the establishment of righteousness on earth. That Cross was not merely an historical phenomenon, to be believed about in accordance with a formulated system of dogma. It was something to be lived and borne in the individual Christian's experience and in that of the Christian group.

The primitive Christian looked out on a world of pain and wrong; but he was conscious also of a fund of power and love, which could be drawn upon by himself, for the conquering of the pain and wrong. This conviction was based on his knowledge of Christ, and of what Christ had done upon the Cross of Golgotha. Christ had stripped himself of power and glory, for our sakes. He had become poor, persecuted, tortured, for our sakes. He had deliberately taken upon himself pain, and pain of the most agonising and dreadful kind, for our sakes. This self-chosen pain, vicariously borne, though it need not have been borne (for Christ might have avoided the Cross in a score of ways), had made available the fund of power and love upon which

the Christian knew that he could draw in order to conquer pain and wrong. The Cross of Golgotha had inspired, and indeed already created, an inevitable spiritual conquest of wrong. Cicero had said of crucifixion "No gentleman will speak of a cross." Another Latin writer had summed it up as meaning *vivus pascere corvos*. Yet Christ had taken *this* upon Himself, unresistingly, to save men. And Christ was the same yesterday, to-day and for ever.

Next, in regard to the personal experience of physical pain, the primitive Christians knew that the Cross meant victory. The greatest of their leaders wrote in one of his letters that he had suffered a pain so agonising that it was like the pain of impalement. It was a pain which crippled his usefulness and made him (apparently) ridiculous. But he had learnt that this intensely personal pain might become to him not only the means of moral discipline, preventing pride and undue self-confidence, but also a sacrament of the grace of God. It had softened his sternness, made him gentle and sympathetic, and bred in him Christlikeness; for it had kept him close to Christ, whose inward voice assured him 'My grace is sufficient for you.' As he looked back, Paul could honestly say that pain had been the making of him. He would not ask for one pang the less. The Cross, borne patiently in this way, had made him strong, so that he could say 'When I am weak, then am I strong.'

Thus to the primitive Christian it became plain that what is significant, from the universal point of view, is not the fact that a man bears pain, but the spirit in which he bears it. Even pain which seems fortuitous and meaningless may be borne redemptively, and thus become of incalculable importance in the elimination of suffering and wrong from the lives of other men. The experience of pain is the golden opportunity for the spirit of Christlikeness to shine through us; for that spirit is built on pain vicariously endured, and through pain comes the deepest joy of all, the bearing of the Cross, with Christ.

It was in the extremity of weakness and pain that Christ Himself did His most creative work. So was it with Latimer, when he cried at the stake, "Be of good cheer, Master Ridley, we shall this day light such a candle in England as shall never be put out." So it has been in a thousand other instances, because the pain has been borne in the right spirit.

But the primitive Christian conception of the Cross went deeper even than this. Paul wrote to his Galatian friends, "I am in agony for you till Christ be formed in you." He realised that he was called upon to carry the Cross in pain borne that others might have life—the life of Christlikeness. He clothes his expression of this thought in words borrowed from the realm of motherhood, saying

in effect, "I am bearing for you an agony like that borne by a mother when she gives life to her child." He sees, that is, the great truth that all motherhood, since it involves creative agony undergone that life may have being (and without life there can be no Christlikeness in humanity), is a realising of divine values, a bearing of the Cross. Paul is often stigmatised by superficial thinkers as a believer in the subjection of womanhood, because (forsooth) he gave certain *ad hoc* directions to suit conditions in the Levantine cities of his day. But his choice of language in this great pronouncement regarding the deepest purpose in his life shows that he recognises the august and eternal significance of motherhood, and that he has learnt from motherhood its expression of the fact that service of humanity means essentially creative anguish vicariously undertaken.

It is of little significance how pain had come upon Paul, either through too ardent driving of the machinery of his body, or through some obscure breakdown of his physical well-being, or through the deliberate choice of a course in life entailing suffering, as in the case of Father Damien, who became a leper in order to save the lepers. What mattered, for Paul and his fellows, and for us still to-day, is the manner in which the pain was and is borne, whether or not it is borne redemptively, and creatively, that Christ may be formed in others.

As each fresh pang came to this great Cross-bearer he prayed moment by moment, "Lord, use this, and this, and this, *for them*, to set them free, to make them like Thyself." Each stab of pain sent him back to God with this prayer. As he suffered, he held his friends up to God through his suffering, and thus he wore his pain for Christ and with Christ. Finally he became fully aware, even in imprisonment and physical breakdown, when he was chained night and day to a Roman soldier, that he could serve Christ actually better under such circumstances than he had ever served Him in the old days when he ran over the earth founding his churches: he could serve Christ better so because of his pain, which was pain borne for Christ and with Christ. He could say, "I fill up the sufferings of Christ." Pain-racked, immobilised, his work finished so far as outward activity went, the aged Apostle knew himself to be working for Christ as he had never worked before, because he was bearing Christ's Cross of pain for others. It was a complete case of the transvaluation of values; and the letter to the Philippians, in which he has set down something of this experience for all ages to read, is by far the greatest single act which Paul ever achieved for Christ, even in that lifetime of titanic energy.

As we read this letter we share with Paul the vision of a spiritual world-order wrestling within

the seen universe, not for happiness, comfort or ease, but for Christlikeness of character in humanity. We see the whole earth, and the whole history of life upon the earth, as a factory of Christlikeness, wherein by a long slow process Christlikeness has been developed. And the heart of that process is suffering borne vicariously. It is a process stretching in one unbroken movement forward from the first appearance of parental sacrifice on earth, long before life emerged from the seas upon the land, going forward to Christ's perfect sacrifice of Golgotha, and proceeding thence to ourselves. It is a process in which each unit of humanity is called to join, through pain self-chosen and self-endured, for the sake of others. And it is summed up in Paul's great words, "Let the same purpose be in you which was in Christ Jesus. He stripped Himself of His glory and took on Him the nature of a slave, and even stooped to die, yes to die the death of the Cross" (Phil. ii. 5-8).

The primitive Christians thus saw through and beyond the horror of pain to a realm where pain is a sacrament, a sharing of the spirit and purpose which sustains the universe, and where, moreover, pain is the supreme method of creative workmanship. The Christians of that age were uneasy and conscience-goaded until they were bearing their share of pain for the righting of wrong and the building of Christlikeness. They knew themselves

to be knaves and cravens if they called themselves disciples of the Cross-bearing Christ and did not take pain upon themselves, to help others. Could they call themselves soldiers of Christ if they were content with a safe and easy life, and left Christ to bear His Cross alone? They would be traitors to Christ in this case instead of His disciples and soldiers. They must strip themselves of one advantage after another: and take upon themselves one pain after another, in order to be like Christ and to share with Him the world's pain from within.

In the same spirit Mr. Gandhi has prayed that in the next life he may be born an Untouchable, in order that he may be able more effectively to help the Untouchables.

The realisation that it is intolerable for the Christian to be easy and comfortable when the Master he follows was treated as a felon and an outcast, tortured and crucified for his sake, and when his fellow-men are groaning under pain and oppression, leads on inevitably to the fact that such a Christian's most earnest prayer becomes this, "Lord, lay on me Thy Cross of pain, for men." This prayer will bring its own answer, in the practical application of the method of the Cross—the seeking and bearing of pain vicariously for the liberation of men.

We live in a universe so constructed (whether

we like the fact or not) that pain and wrong can only be conquered effectively in one way, by self-welcomed suffering. Even Omnipotence itself has no other way of conquering the evil will, except by bearing patiently the worst that it can do. Calvary has shown that this is a universal and eternal truth. The universe, and God in and beyond the universe, stand in need of a great reservoir of sacramental pain, to which the individual Christ-follower must contribute, whether by self-chosen pain, or by bearing vicariously for Christ and for his fellow-men the pain which has come upon him in a fashion that may appear fortuitous.

This primitive Christian teaching of and attitude to the eternal Cross may be summed up as follows:

The Incarnation and Death of Christ show us that God suffers, and suffers vicariously: He suffers that the evil will may be changed into a good will: this can only be effected even by God Himself, still more by man, through the patient bearing of pain and wrong.

All pain may be borne as a sacrament of the presence and grace of Christ: as the deepest joy: as a direct means of aiding Christ's work: as a means for creating Christlikeness in the world: as a sharing of God's eternal purpose.

Self-chosen pain (and this includes pain that may seem fortuitous, but is borne in the right spirit) is essential to the creative process, and we are cowards and shirkers unless we share in it.

Such self-chosen pain *works miracles* to conquer the pain and wrong under which others groan: the man who has borne even a little of it will affirm that he counts all that

he has lost as mere refuse in view of the glorious creative activity which this sharing through pain in God's purpose has opened up before him.

The idealism of *Satyagraha* is fundamentally a re-affirmation of these primitive Christian convictions. Mr. Gandhi, as the typical *Satyagrahi*, has read his New Testament with profound effect. He, an idealist, is also an arch-realist; for he has had the genius to bring the idealism of the Cross down to earth, from the realm of musty theological dogma, and to discern that it is not a thing of creeds and ecclesiastics but a working programme for the reform of concrete problems in a world of blatant realism.

The extraordinary success of the *Satyagraha* of 1930 is a sign which should be greeted with the deepest joy and hopefulness by all Christians. As those unarmed crowds, old men, youths, women, children pressed up to the ranks of the police in the eager desire that they might suffer unresistingly, the Cross came back in power upon earth—not as a dogma, but as a working policy. As the police, driven by an odious necessity to use the weapons of force against these protagonists of the spiritual, gave them the suffering which they desired, the victory of *Satyagraha* became absolutely inevitable. Mr. Gandhi's words were proved true, "No power on earth can stand before the march of a peaceful, determined and God-fearing people." But far more

was achieved than the Gandhi-Irwin settlement of March 1931, and the eventual freeing of India from British domination. What was achieved was the setting up once more upon earth of the Eternal Cross, the bringing of Christ's method and Christ's mind into direct and victorious contact with modern imperial and national problems, on a scale of operation involving populations which number in all one-quarter of the human race.

The world can never be the same again after the success of this movement. The idealism of the Cross is dangerous. It may be misinterpreted and misapplied. Mr. Gandhi himself points out the risks that may accompany the popularising of *Satyagraha*, if its methods are used for petty ends and in a petty spirit. But it has been proved, once for all, on the widest possible scale, that all things are possible to those who are prepared to suffer enough for the ending of pain and wrong and for the establishment of truth and right.

Some day perhaps the peoples of the West will realise the significance of what has happened, and will learn from the East to apply the methods of the Cross to the solving of their own great problems, especially the problem of international warfare. But at present, it is to be feared, we are too comfortable, too well off, too well fed. At present *Satyagraha* is looked upon in the West, in spite of the astounding victory which it has won, as ridiculous and undig-

nified. Working-class hearers, when told about it, characterise it as 'grown-up sulks.' More educated audiences regard it with cold disfavour. It is too exotic, too unconventional—in a word, too Christian for us.

But some day we shall awaken to the significance of what has happened, and begin to be Christian again—that is, to live and work by the Cross.

“What has not yet been found in the West is a moral genius of such commanding spiritual personality as to be able to unite and combine the various organised efforts (for world peace) into one overwhelming movement of Non-Violence which shall be strong enough to sweep away on a tide of world approval the opposing forces.”¹

God send us that personality before it is too late.

¹ C. F. Andrews' *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas*, p. 349.



A P P E N D I X

The following extracts from a speech delivered by Mr. Gandhi to an Economic Society at Allahabad will serve to illustrate his attitude towards Christ and Christ's teachings:

Does economic progress clash with real progress? . . . The question we are asking ourselves this evening is not a new one. It was addressed to Jesus two thousand years ago. St. Mark has vividly described the scene. Jesus is in His solemn mood. He is earnest. He talks of eternity. He knows the world about Him. He is Himself the greatest economist of His time. He succeeded in economising time and space—He transcended them. It is to Him at His best that one comes running, kneels down, and asks, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said unto him: Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the commandments. Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Defraud not. Honour thy father and thy mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him: One thing thou lackest. Go thy way, sell whatever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And come, take up the cross and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about and said unto His disciples: How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said unto them, Children, how hard it is for them

that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Here you have an eternal rule of life stated in the noblest words the English language is capable of producing. But the disciples nodded unbelief, as we do even to this day. To him they said, as we say to-day: "But look how the law fails in practice. If we sell all and have nothing, we shall have nothing to eat. We must have money or we cannot even be reasonably moral." So they state their case thus—And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves: Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them said, With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible. Then Peter began to say unto him: "Lo, we have left all and have followed thee." And Jesus answered and said, "Verily I say unto you there is no man that has left house or brethren or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands for My sake and the Gospel's but he shall receive one hundredfold, now in this time houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and land, and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last and the last, first."

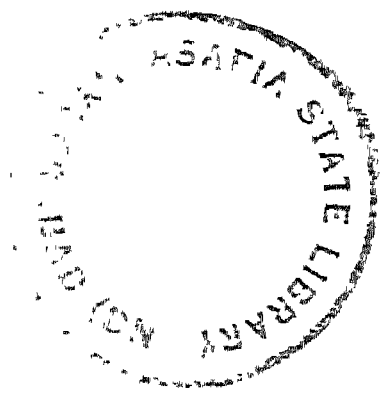
You have here the result or reward, if you prefer the term, of following the law. I have not taken the trouble of copying similar passages from the other non-Hindu scriptures, and I will not insult you by quoting, in support of the law stated by Jesus, passages from the writings and sayings of our own sages, passages even stronger, if possible, than the Biblical extracts I have drawn your attention to. . . . In so far as we have made the modern materialistic craze our goal, so far are we going downhill in the path of progress. I hold that economic progress in the sense I have put it is antagonistic to real progress. Hence the ancient ideal has been the limitation of activities promoting wealth. This does not put an end

to all material ambition. We should still have, as we have always had, in our midst people who make the pursuit of wealth their aim in life. But we have always recognised that it is a fall from the ideal. It is a beautiful thing to know that the wealthiest among us have often felt that to have remained voluntarily poor would have been a higher state for them. That you cannot serve God and Mammon is an economic truth of the highest value. We have to make our choice. Western nations are to-day groaning under the heel of the monster god of materialism. Their moral growth has become stunted. They measure their progress in £ s. d. . . . I would have our leaders teach us to be morally supreme in the world. This land of ours was once, we are told, the abode of the Gods. It is not possible to conceive Gods inhabiting a land which is made hideous by the smoke and the din of mill chimneys and factories and whose roadways are traversed by rushing engines. . . .

We need not be afraid of ideals or of reducing them to practice even to the uttermost. Ours will only then be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than love of self. If we will but clean our houses, our palaces and temples of the attributes of wealth and show in them the attributes of morality, we can offer battle to any combinations of hostile forces without having to carry the burden of a heavy militia.

Let us first seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and the irrevocable promise is that everything will be added to us. These are real economics. May you and I treasure them and enforce them in our daily life.¹

¹ Quoted in *Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi*, pp. 286 ff.



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